





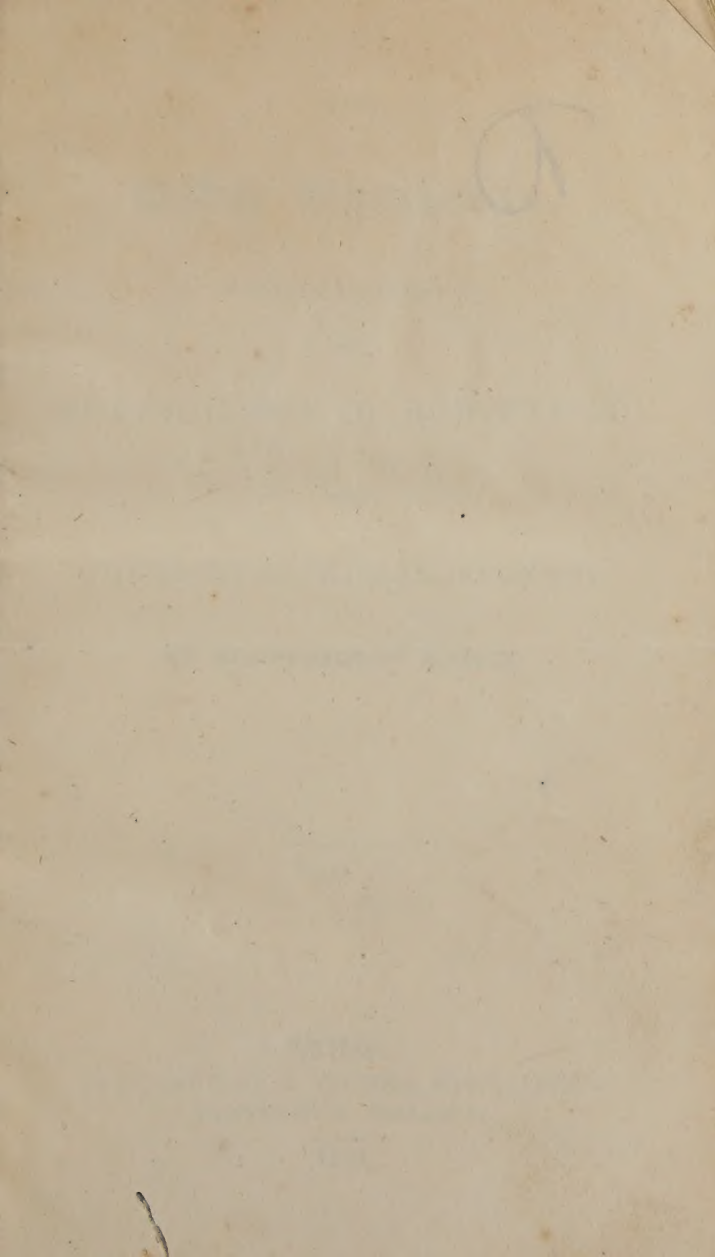
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THE
Bible Christian.

DESIGNED TO ADVOCATE

THE
SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE,
AND
THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT,
IN MATTERS OF FAITH.

VOL. I.

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1830.

THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE

TO KNOW THE TRUTH

AND TO BE HEARD

IN

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Index to Volume K.

	PAGE.
America, Unitarianism in,	535
Arian, The Creed of an,	68
Armagh Congregation, Remonstrance of,	344
Armagh Presbytery, Division of,	43
Address to the Readers of "The Bible Christian," on the close of the year,	573
Ballycarry Congregation,	87
Ballymena Presbytery, Queries to,	37
Bangor Presbytery, Lost Records of,	167
Records, Extracts from,	171
Remonstrant,	39 88
Belfast Presbytery, Queries to,	37
Bigot, Letter to a,	441
—, The,	166
Brown, Rev. John, and Mr. Porter,	185 328 422
Cairncastle Congregation,	87
Calvinism, Inconsistencies of,	405
Calvinist, Strictures on the Confession of a,	135
Campbell, Lord Templeton and the Rev. Robert,	533
Carpenter's Lectures, Leading statements from,	530
Christ, on the Deity of,	525
—, On the Worship and Ubiquity of,	240
Charity, On Christian,	36
Clough Congregation,	45
Comber Congregation,	252
Comparisons, Synodical,	346
Cooke, Bellis, &c. Their letter to W. Montgomery, Esq.	102
—, Philalethes to the Rev. Dr.	225
—, W. to the ————	459
Correspondents, 48, 107, 156, 204, 252, 300, 348, 392, 440 488, 536, 578.	
Criminals, On the delusive hopes held out to,	559
Crumlin Congregation,	391

22792

	PAGE.
Derryboy, Remonstrant Dinner at,	298
Discourse, by the Rev. George Harris,	534
Discourses, Extracts from the Rev. R. Robinson's,	530, 570
Dromore Presbytery, Meeting at Comber of,	252
Extracts, from Locke, Milton, Whitby, and Taylor,	454
Faith, Justification by,	489
—— On Consistency in the Christian	275
Fanaticism, On	434
—— The progress of,	291
Fund, Presbyterian,	293
General Synod of Ulster,	217, 243, 390, 487
Geneva, A Vindication of the Church of,	147
—— Calumnies against the Church of,	78
Glenarm Congregation,	85
Greyabbey Congregation.	88
—— Remonstrant Dinner at,	390
Good cause, Clerical zeal in a,	392
Harris, Christian Worship, a discourse by the Rev. George,	534
Inquiry, Orthodox Plans to prevent Religious,	519
Intelligence, 46, 85, 156, 196, 245, 291, 340, 390 439, 477, 533.	
Interpreter, Scripture its own, 82, 127, 179, 218, 264 356, 514, 543.	
Irish Unitarian Christian Society, Cork Branch of the,	496
Lectures—Belfast, Dublin, Holywood, Moneyrea—at, 204,	252
Letter, by a Lady to an Orthodox Gentleman,	565
—— From W. Montgomery, Esq. to Rev. H. Montgomery,	106
—— From Rev. W. Porter, to Editors, in reply to Rev. J. Brown,	185, 328, 422
—— From Rev. J. M'Laughlin to Rev. J. Browne	439
—— From Rev. H. Cooke, G. Bellis, &c. to W. Montgo- mery, Esq.	102
—— From Rev. J. Watson to the Moderator of Bangor Presbytery,	96
Likeness, a striking	215
Member of the Church of England, Confessions of a, 365,	440
M'Laughlin, Rev. John, and Mr. J. Brown,	439
Moderation, on	33
Montgomery, William, Esq. his Letter to Rev. H. Montgo- mery,	106
Munster, Synod of,	340
Obituary,	299, 578

	PAGE,
Opinions, Observations on an Essay, on the formation of, .	142
Orthodox Assertions,	384
Orthodox Presbyterian, Abuse of Scripture in the .	387
Editorial Note in the,	527
On I. Cor. xv, 24,	150, 243
Remarks on the 1st volume of	555
Strictures on some passages of the, 25,	414
The criticism of the, on Matt. xii. 8,	287
The Remonstrant Synod and the,	316
372, 463.	
The Rev. W. Glendy to the Editors	
of the,	235
Overtures, Synodical,	153, 157, 253
Porter, Rev. William, and Mr. John Brown,	185, 328, 422
Presbyterian Church, Recent dissensions in the,	205, 301
Presbyterian, The Synod of Ulster and the,	217
Presbytery of Armagh,	43
Presbyteries of Ballymena, Belfast, and Templepatrick,	
Queries to the,	37
Presbytery of Bangor, Extracts from the Records of	167
Lost Records of,	171
Remonstrant,	39
of Templepatrick, Remonstrant,	45
Publications, Notice of Religious,	371
Reason in Religious Matters, On the Exercise of,	61
Religion, On free Inquiry in matters of,	509
Remarks, Introductory,	4
Remonstrant Synod of Ulster,	245, 487
Presbytery of Bangor,	39
of Templepatrick,	45
Scriptures, On the principal English Translations of,	550
Sermons, Review of one of Dr. Dwight's,	359
Sin, On original,	211
Smith, Ordination of the Rev. William,	440
Subscribers,	48, 107, 488, 536
Synod, Meeting of the General,	343
Rebellion in the General,	390
Meeting of the Remonstrant,	245
Synodical Orthodoxy, The essence of,	66
Synods, Conjoined Meeting of General and Remonstrant,	487
Review of some Modern, 18, 49, 109, 279,	305
349, 393, 500, 538.	
Templepatrick Congregation,	86, 439, 578

	PAGE.
Templepatrick Presbytery, - - -	37, 45
Trinity, On the, - - -	118, 312
Truth, The Bible a Repository of, - -	- 124
Ulster, Meeting of the General Synod of, - - -	343
——— Rebellion in the General Synod of, - - -	390
——— Meeting of the Remonstrant Synod of, .. -	245
Unitarian Christian Society, Irish, - - -	223
Unitarian Churches, Kíllileagh and Saintfield, - - -	46
——— Observations by a, - - -	338
——— Writer, Orthodox misquotations of a, - - -	498
Warrenpoint Congregation, - - -	391
Waterford, Letter from, - - -	495
Watson, Rev. John, his letter to the Remonstrant Presby- tery of Bangor, - - -	96

THE
Bible Christian.

No. I.

FEBRUARY, 1830.

VOL. I.

PROSPECTUS.

THE disputes, which, for some years past, have unhappily agitated the Synod of Ulster, are but too well known to the Public. The friends of peace and unity in that Body, who were opposed to a departure from its ancient usages, solemn engagements, and established laws, having just reason to complain, that their views, both of Doctrine and Discipline, were greatly misunderstood or misrepresented, and sincerely desiring, that the public might have a fair opportunity of forming a *true estimate* of all the points in controversy, made a proposal to their opponents, based, as they conceived, upon the most evident principles of candour and justice. They earnestly requested their brethren to unite with them in the establishment of a Joint Publication, whose pages should go forth monthly, having the sentiments of the two parties placed *side by side*, to enable the people to compare their respective arguments with each other; and both with the Word of God. Such a Publication, from its singularity and importance, would doubtless have circulated very extensively amongst all classes of the community; and its results would, in all likelihood, have been most salutary. When men are committed against each other, in controversy of any kind, they naturally endeavour to state their own views in the most favourable light, whilst those of their opponents, sometimes from misapprehension, and, perhaps, sometimes from design, are too unfavourably represented. This is peculiarly the case in differences connected with religious subjects, where a want of candour is generally conspicuous, and pre-eminently culpable.

The minority of the Synod of Ulster, therefore, and the friends of peace in general, deeply lamented that their brethren, for reasons on which they shall make no comment, declined acceding to their proposal. They are persuaded, that if their offer had been met in a fraternal spirit, and the Work carried forward with Christian temper, the unhappy division of the Synod, which has since taken place, would never have occurred; whilst much suffering would have been warder from individuals, and much discredit from the Church.

Upon a dispassionate consideration and comparison of their principles, the people might have discovered that the two parties differed less than they had been led to believe, and thus *Charity* would have been promoted: or, they might have found good reason, on either side, to change their opinions, and thus the cause of *Truth* would have been advanced. Instead of this happy consummation, however the people have been left to all the baneful influence of partial and party representations, by which their prejudices have been strengthened, and their passions inflamed: whilst various Publications, Periodical, and others, tending to perpetuate this unhappy state of the public mind, continue to be circulated with unceasing industry and zeal.

Some of the late minority of the Synod, therefore, and other friends of religious truth and liberty, uniting in their general views and feelings, perceiving the necessity of disabusing the Public mind, which, they lament to say, has lately been exposed to the influence of many and serious misrepresentations, and acting upon their uniform principle of *self-defence*, are compelled to come before the world, in vindication of their own opinions, and of what they believe to be the cause of Divine Truth. In this task, they engage with reluctance; feeling that they must occasionally withdraw themselves from the delightful employment of inculcating the serious, the important, and the peaceful duties of life, to mingle in "the strife of words," which, according to the Apostle, "ministers questions, rather than godly edifying, which is in Faith." This reluctance is increased by the consideration, that those who most require instruction, have, in general, their minds so occupied by prejudice, that they will not read the *defence*, though they have eagerly and implicitly received the *injurious accusation*. Still, however, though much of their seed "should fall amongst brambles, by the way side, or upon stony places," they will nevertheless "go forth to sow," trusting, that, under the blessing of the Great King and Head of the Church, "some," at least, "shall fall upon good ground, and bring forth, some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold."

Assuming it as incontrovertible, that Moses and the Prophets, the Lord Jesus Christ and his inspired Followers, taught all that was necessary of Divine Truth, "for the salvation of sinners," and "shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God," in terms sufficiently explicit and intelligible, the conductors of THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN will not contend for the peculiar views of Arius or Athanasius, of Arminius or Calvin; but shall humbly endeavour to maintain the authority of the Sacred Scriptures as the only infallible standard of Faith, Worship, and Duty. Resting upon this immoveable foundation, they will strenuously advocate the right of Private Judgment,

explain the true principles of Presbyterianism, maintain the privileges of Pastors and People, and endeavour to separate the genuine Doctrines of the BIBLE, from "the traditions and commandments of men." Communications of all kinds, tending to promote these great objects, will be received with gratitude; and the most accurate information on religious affairs throughout the world, and especially in Ireland, shall be faithfully communicated.

The friends of THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN have resolved, on all points of Doctrine and Discipline, where the wisest and best of men have differed, and where no earthly authority can determine which side has the sanction of *absolute Truth*, that they will conduct their Publication with a moderation and candour worthy of its name. At the same time, they will make no compromise with moral turpitude, undoubted acts of persecution, false profession, or culpable misrepresentation. In exposing these, with an unsparing hand, they feel, that they will not be acting inconsistently with the spirit of Him who rebuked the "Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites:" whilst, in doing so, they may render an essential service to the community, by lessening the pernicious influence of those "which say they are Jews, and are not."

The Conductors of THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN, having reason to expect the aid of a number of literary friends, hope to make it interesting and instructive to religious inquirers, not merely in Ireland, but also in England and Scotland.

Each number will contain 36 pages, demy duodecimo. The Publication will make, yearly, a handsome volume of 432 pages; with a Title Page and Index, to be delivered gratis.

Price, 5s. per annum, if paid in advance; and, if otherwise, 6d. per number.

As the circulation of this Periodical promises to be very extensive, among a large and respectable portion of the community, it will be a favourable channel for literary and other *Advertisements*; which will be inserted on the most moderate terms.

Communications, free of expense, to be forwarded to the Conductors, care of MR. SAMUEL ARCHER, Bookseller, High-Street, BELFAST; who will likewise receive *Subscriptions* for the Work, and *Advertisements* for publication.

 To be Sold by the principal Booksellers in the United Kingdom.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

“The BIBLE—the BIBLE, ONLY, is the Religion of Protestants.”

Chillingworth.

OUR Prospectus, in the preceding pages, contains a brief outline of the origin and objects of THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN. The public, however, are entitled to a more detailed account of our *reasons*, for engaging in the disagreeable and ungracious task of theological controversy. But, before we enter upon our arduous duties, we earnestly entreat our readers, of every denomination, to unite with us in fervent supplication to the Throne of Grace, that the Spirit of Truth may enlighten our minds, and the Spirit of the Gospel animate our hearts; that prejudice may not act as a veil to prevent us from discerning “the whole counsel of God,” and that human vanity may not mislead us with regard to the soundness of our own opinions; that, if in *error*, we may *ourselves* be *converted*, whilst we endeavour to *enlighten others*, and that, if we be *right*, neither *dangers* on the one hand, nor *allurements* on the other, may ever be able to seduce us from the path of integrity; and finally, that the present conflict “between light and darkness,” may result in the permanent advancement of Truth, and the salvation of sinners—whether it may terminate in our discomfiture, or that of our opponents. We solemnly declare, that the promotion of Evangelical Truth is our primary object; and that the best interests of man, temporal and eternal, are our ultimate end. The sincerity of this declaration cannot be doubted, by any who are acquainted with the past history, or present condition of the world. Those that have endeavoured to stem the torrent of popular and profitable error, have often conferred blessings upon *posterity*; but, from the Divine Saviour of the World, to the humblest of his faithful followers, they have, almost without exception, brought sorrow and suffering upon *themselves*. The last two centuries have furnished no æra, in which this truth has been more fully illustrated, than that in which we live. There is no ordeal of obloquy, persecution, or injury, within the pale of the civil law, and the power of our adversa-

ries, to which, for the maintenance of conscience, we have not been subjected. One of our number, therefore, has justly said, "that although 'the worldly wise and prudent' may call us *fools*, for the unprofitable course which we have honestly pursued, it would require the malignity of a demon to pronounce us *knaves*." Our eyes are fully open to the difficulties and dangers of our undertaking—a path of thorns, and briars, and barrenness, lies before us. We feel that we are going forth under almost every possible disadvantage—against the rooted prejudices of ages, the wild clamour of the multitude, the fashion of the world, the interests of time, the deceitfulness of visionary hopes, the selfish ambition of man, and the dexterous opposition of practised opponents: but, firmly believing, that we are engaged in a righteous cause; confident of the sympathy and countenance of many of the wisest and best amongst our fellow-mortals; and, above all, relying upon the blessing of Heaven, which can alone secure success, we calmly gird on our Christian armour, equally undismayed by the numbers and the boastings of our adversaries. In trials of bodily strength, "numbers may constitute power," but, in the open field of argument, they are feeble as the hairless Samson; and the history of the world, we believe, does not afford one instance, in which they have been marshalled on the side of *Truth*. The religion of the Old Testament was violently opposed by hosts of idolaters; the religion of Jesus was resisted and persecuted both by Jews and Gentiles; and, at this moment, *three-fourths* of mankind are the enemies of Christianity; whilst, with regard to the remaining *one-fourth*, the majority of Protestants, at least, will admit that they are in error. The opposition of numbers and power, therefore, affords a presumptive argument in favour of our cause; and as a ground of intimidation, it can never seduce from the path of integrity, the sincere and honest Christian, who looks for the reward of his fidelity, in another and a better world. Our opponents may triumph in their "locust multitudes," and make a vain boast of the earthly pomp and power by which they are supported. "None of these things move us:" we are content to be approved by the "*few*," who, like the faithful of the Church of Sardis in the Revelation, "have not defiled their garments;" and we are consoled under the general enmity of "the Great Ones

of the earth," by knowing, that "the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ is not of this world." We humbly trust, that in us, the saying of the Great Master is fulfilled—"If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but, because ye are not of the world, therefore, the world hateth you." Cheered by this hope, we proceed to illustrate our principles, and to defend our rights; actuated not so much by personal considerations, as by a sincere desire to promote the cause of Truth, and even "to do good unto those who despitefully use us and persecute us."

In sending forth our humble Publication, under the appellation of **THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN**, we do not mean to insinuate, that all who dissent from our religious opinions, reject or undervalue the authority of the Sacred Scriptures. This would be to act the arrogant part of our brethren, who assume to themselves the exclusive title of "*Orthodox*," and presumptuously designate all those, "*Enemies of the Truth*," who do not precisely reach the height of their theological standard. Such conduct we shall never imitate; for we have sincere pleasure in believing, that many excellent christians, whose religious views widely differ from our own, are zealously attached to the Sacred Records, as the only unerring standard of Faith and Duty. We, therefore, adopt the title of **THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN**, not as implying any thing invidious towards others, but as the only designation properly descriptive of our own principles. Our minds are not sufficiently disciplined and subdued, to fall into the ranks of any human leader; and we dare not *profess* a uniformity of sentiment, which we do not *entertain*. We look upon Arius and Luther, Calvin and Arminius, and all the other distinguished Founders of Sects, as only our erring fellow-mortals. They may be entitled to our respect, but they have no claim upon our submission; and, we are deeply convinced, that nothing has been more injurious to the cause of genuine Christianity, than the veneration attached to human names and human systems. The earliest corruptions of Gospel principles, and the first dawnings of unhallowed divisions in the Church, may be distinctly traced to an undue respect for human leaders. Even in the apostolic days, one said, "I am of Paul; another, I am of Cephas; and another, I am of Apollos." The same spirit has continued to prevail,

and never existed in greater vigour than in the present age. "CHRIST, THE HEAD," seems to be forgotten amidst the wild and ignorant conflict of sectarian partisanship. Hosts crowd upon hosts to maintain the honor of *Calvin*, and establish the ascendancy of *Orthodoxy*; whilst the benevolent precepts and the holy example of the great "Author and Finisher of our Faith," are almost universally neglected. We are, therefore, determined "to call no man Lord or Master; for one is our Master, even Christ, and all we are brethren." We are not, however, without a bond of union: we are united in uncompromising allegiance to "the great King and Head of the Church," in a profound veneration for the Sacred Scriptures, and in a firm, unalterable resolution to resist all human authority in the momentous concerns of faith and conscience. Uniformity of opinion we do not, we cannot profess: we could not look in each others' faces, and agree to publish to the world that we are of the *same creed*, whilst we know that there is a very considerable diversity of sentiment amongst us: and we are not hardened and hypocritical enough to flatter the passions and prejudices of the multitude, at the expense of our own integrity! The injured and oppressed shall always find us their strenuous advocates; and, on this ground, the Remonstrants of the Synod of Ulster may calculate on our best support, though we are not, in any degree, subject to their control; nor do we pretend to be the organ of their religious opinions. Indeed, we are well aware, that the general tone of our Doctrinal Articles will be opposed to the views of several of the Remonstrants; and, we think it fair to make this explicit avowal, that no man's interests or principles may be compromised or misrepresented, from a supposed alliance with us, whilst, in reality, he does not participate in our labours, our opinions, or our responsibility. At the same time, we owe it to ourselves to state, that our pages shall not be *exclusive*: our object is, not to blindfold but to enlighten—not to promote the interests of a *party*, but to advance the cause of *truth*; and, consequently, we shall not confine ourselves to articles, maintaining the views of a sect, but shall cheerfully insert, when not inconvenient, communications of diversified doctrinal character. We are convinced that truth has no more to apprehend from a comparison with error, than a giant

would have to dread his being cast into the shade by the presence of a dwarf. But, although we admit, that, on many points, a diversity of opinion exists amongst ourselves, there are certain grand principles upon which we are perfectly "of one mind."

We agree in believing, that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as the Word of God, are a perfect rule of faith and practice, and contain all knowledge necessary to salvation. Indeed, the very admission of a revelation, implies its perfection and efficiency. To allege that it is either defective or unintelligible, would be to arraign both the wisdom and power of the Supreme Being. We, therefore, rejoice with the Psalmist in believing, that, "the Law of the Lord is perfect, making wise the simple, and converting the soul that lieth in sin." We are convinced, that as "God would have *all* men to be saved, and willeth not that *any* should perish," the *means* which he has adopted must be adequate to the accomplish the *ends* which he had in view. We are, consequently, the uncompromising opponents of all human creeds, confessions, and articles of Faith, because, amongst many other evils, they virtually deny the Perfection of the Divine Law. To allege that a human creed contains a clearer and more edifying explication of Divine Truth, than that which is to be found in the Sacred Volume, amounts to the impiety of asserting, that the spirit of man is wiser than the Spirit of God. It is vain to urge, that, Article-mongers and Test-makers do not exalt their interpretations above "the perfect Law of the Lord," but merely adopt them as a mode of explaining *the meaning* which *they* attach to the Sacred Records, and of ascertaining that *others* concur in their *explanations*. What is this, but saying, in other words, that the Scriptures do not adequately explain their *own meaning*, and requiring assent to *human explications* as of equal authority with the Word of God, and superior to it in efficacy and distinctness? To this presumption of men, in "deifying their own interpretations," may be justly ascribed the most degrading corruptions which have tarnished the glory of the christian name, and the most appalling enactments and persecutions which have disgraced the christian character. The moment that human explanations usurped the authority of Divine Truth, the Holy Scriptures began to lose their influence, and

were eventually banished from the hearts and homes of the people, until they were lost amidst the rubbish of cloisters and the dust of libraries. The Apostles' creed, the Nicene creed, the Athanasian creed, the Decrees of Councils, the ceremonies of the Church, continued to flourish in unrestrained luxuriance, but the *Bible* was almost as little known, and its authority as little valued, as if the Merciful God had never blessed the world with a revelation of his Will. Even the Reformation, and the Art of Printing, which once more restored the Scriptures to the light of day, were not able to restore their supreme authority, as the only certain rule of Faith and Life. They have been treated, indeed, with all the ceremonies of reverence, praised with all the ardour of enthusiasm, and disseminated with all the activity of zeal; but the poisoned mantle of "human inventions" still clings around them with a deadly tenacity, and paralyzes their divine and benignant energies. Lay Parliaments and clerical Conclaves have encumbered them with countless Articles, and Confessions, and Tests, which equally mar their beauty and impede their influence; so that a pure Scriptural Church is rarely to be found in the wide extent of Christendom, even after three centuries of boasted Reformation. Reading, therefore, in history, and viewing in the world around us, the enormous evils that have resulted from undervaluing the Word of God, and setting up other standards of Faith and Worship, we are firmly united in an unchangeable determination to adopt no creed but the BIBLE, and to serve no Master but CHRIST.

We farther agree in believing, that it is the bounden duty, and inalienable right of every Christian, to read the Sacred Scriptures, to investigate their contents with prayerful seriousness, and to deduce his own conclusions with regard to the doctrines which they teach, the duties which they inculcate, and the sanctions which they unfold. The sacred fountain is opened up, "for the healing of the nations;" *all*, without exception, are invited to drink of its abundant and refreshing streams; for "the Spirit and the bride say, come; and let him that is athirst, come; and everyone that *will*, let him take of the waters of life freely." Indeed, the command is absolute,— "Search the Scriptures; let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind;" and the Bereans are praised,

as being "more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the Word of God with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so." From *the duty of inquiry*, we infer *the right of judging*: and as every individual must be personally responsible for the exercise of his privileges, we maintain, that no man, or body of men, can be justified in interfering, by penalty, privation, or injury of any kind, with his conscientious opinions. In reading the Sacred Records, every man *must* adopt certain convictions, with regard to their contents, resulting from the duty of investigation in which he has been engaged; and to allege, that he may be justly punished or inconvenienced for the conclusions at which he has necessarily arrived, would not only be extremely absurd, but exceedingly criminal. To inflict a penalty for the faithful discharge of a duty, and the conscientious exercise of a right, is to carry injustice to the highest pinnacle of iniquity; and yet such acts have been perpetrated ten thousand times, under the pretended sanction of the purest and most benevolent Religion. Persecution, indeed, has never walked abroad under his proper name, and in his naked deformity. He has usually assumed the appellation of *zeal*, and covered himself with the mantle of hypocritical sanctity. Whilst occupied in planning dungeons, preparing racks, and collecting fagots, his eyes have been audaciously raised to Heaven; whilst gloating in savage triumph over the personal agonies and temporal privations of his victims, he has always been pre-eminently anxious for the happiness of their souls: when most deeply engaged in schemes of misrepresentation and falsehood, he has uniformly talked most loudly of sincerity and truth: when his heart and his thoughts have been absorbed in projects of worldly interest and ambition, he has put on the subdued air of humility, and canted about the glories of eternity: when busied in forging fetters for the conscience, and treading down the dearest privileges of man, he has always been declaiming about liberty, and talking of the rights of the people: and when most determined to set at nought the hallowed precepts of the Gospel, the blessed name of its benevolent author has perpetually dwelt upon his tongue! Oh! what outrages have been committed against humanity, and what blasphemies uttered against Heaven, under the hypocritical plea of

“the love of souls!” Thank God! the horrible implements of bodily torture have been broken, and the flaming piles of martyrdom extinguished by the christian energies of the Civil Law; but the dark spirit of Persecution, that called them into existence, still lingers upon the earth. His voice sounds in the storm of controversy, and whispers in the breeze of affected moderation. He assumes a thousand varied shapes to accomplish his designs. With all the subtlety of the primeval serpent, he steals, in the guise of religion, into private families, and kindles the embers of strife; he glides into peaceful congregations, pours the deadly poison of falsehood into the ears of the people, writhes himself around the sleepless pillows of their calumniated and ruined pastors, and leaves “a waste and howling wilderness,” where he found an Eden of peace and love. Sometimes he enters into the hearts of Synods and Presbyteries, inflating them with vanity, ambition, and “all uncharitableness;” carrying Ministers of the Gospel forward, in a wild career, to disturb the peace and ruin the families of their conscientious brethren, by arts and exertions that would dishonour the followers of Mahomet: and sometimes he over-runs the country in the form of irreligious Tracts, or Phamphlets, filled with groundless calumnies, or Preachers of discord, calling themselves Ministers of Peace! We have seen him in all these forms, and many others: we have traced him, in his odious progress, from district to district: we have entered the once happy homes which he has changed into abodes of sorrow: we have beheld enlightened, virtuous, venerable Ministers withering under his malignant grasp: we have witnessed the severing of long-tried friendships, and the disjoining of the whole frame of society—we have looked upon all these, and entertained a doubt whether Persecution, in his ancient robes of flame and blood, was really more hateful, or destructive, than in his modern garb of saintly and hollow profession! The vengeance of the dark ages was certainly more appalling—the apparatus of torture was more visible and terrific; but we seriously question, whether “*the holy zeal*,” which built up its heretical victims in walls and dungeons, or pulled their joints asunder by the almost imperceptible motion of the rack, or doomed them to be consumed by the lingering torment of green fagots, “that they might feel themselves dying,” was more subtle and ingenious than that displayed by some of those who call themselves “advocates of truth,” in the present day. We do not know any thing more heart-crushing than it is for a

man of spotless truth and integrity to find himself the victim of the basest falsehood—his friends alienated without cause ; his people seduced by all the arts of dissimulation ; his doctrines shamefully misrepresented in the very centre of his congregation, by his brother Ministers ; his unprincipled Landlord threatening to cast him houseless upon the world ; his mind harassed with anxiety ; his body wasted with fatigue ; and the scanty means of supporting his numerous family crumbling rapidly away before his face. Such is the deplorable situation of several Ministers at present, whose talents, and principles, and characters, would have adorned the purest ages of Christianity ; and whose only *crime* is, that they will not violate their consciences, and forsake their fidelity to their Saviour ! Tell us not, that in all this there is no persecution, because the body is not bound to the stake, nor stretched upon the rack. “ He takes my life, who taketh that which doth support my life : ” and those who unjustly deprive a faithful Minister of the affections of his people, by misrepresentations, take away what he values above life itself !—There is a torture of the *mind*, not less awful than that of the body ; and when we look upon the pale cheek, the sunk-eye, and the hoary head of manhood—when we behold the winter of life pressing rapidly upon its summer, without the natural intervention of a calm and abundant autumn, we feel, that there are many means, independent of personal violence, by which wretched men may be prematurely hurried to “ the cold and narrow house.” It is vain to say that a peaceful conscience should enable a man to look with a tranquil eye upon every calamity : we bless God that it can do much, that it has done much, to sustain the persecuted and oppressed ; but when he beholds his family standing on the brink of ruin, because he has refused to utter a falsehood or to surrender his dearest rights, whilst others, who have made these sacrifices, are basking in the sunshine of popular favour and worldly prosperity, we ask, is it in human nature that he should not find a double portion of gall and wormwood, infused into the bitter cup of his afflictions ? That his integrity is a great support, that it must cheer him as to the final issue of the struggle in which he has been engaged, we joyfully admit : but no sentiment of conscious rectitude, however strong, can render a man callous to unmerited injury, and to the sufferings of the cherished objects of his holiest and dearest affections. We shall, therefore, “ cry aloud and spare not,” in vindication of the natural and christian right of every

man to read the Sacred Scriptures, and to draw his own conclusions with regard to the doctrines which they inculcate, and the duties which they enjoin. Until this right be fully admitted, not only in *vain words*, but in *substantial practice*; until every man shall be as free to worship God, without penalty or privation, as he is to enjoy "the vital breeze or light of heaven," Christianity will never regain its native lustre, nor produce its genuine fruits. To what, but the violation of this right, can be attributed all the corruptions and persecutions that have disgraced the Christian name, in past generations! And to what other source can be traced the tyrannies and distractions, which, at this moment, render the Presbyterian Church of Ulster, an object of derision and reproach to all the other churches of Christendom!

We do not attribute a persecuting spirit to *all*, nor even to *many* of those that have been instrumental in carrying forward the unhappy measures of late years, in the Synod of Ulster. Some of them, we are persuaded, are influenced by a mistaken zeal, and think "that they are doing God service:" others are incapable of duly estimating either the principles or the results of their conduct: but the great majority are men of feeble purpose, placed in trying circumstances, and carried onward, by the tide of popular clamour, into an apparent approval of measures, which they inwardly deprecate and lament. To cast any severe censure upon the classes of individuals just referred to, would be uncharitable and unjust. They may be deluded, uninformed, or deficient in moral fortitude; but, to accuse them of any high degree of criminality, would scarcely be less absurd, than to blame the pistol of the duellist, or the dagger of the assassin. They are but instruments in the hands of others: and, we are convinced, that *nine* out of every *ten*, heartily disapprove of the proceedings in which they have nominally participated. Indeed, many of them freely acknowledge this, and appear so galled by the degrading thralldom in which they are held, that, they evidently only wait a favourable opportunity of turning upon their drivers. One of them, during a late Meeting of Synod, met a friend of ours upon the street, seized his hand, wrung it in agony, and exclaimed with a fervour that can never be forgotten—"God bless you, and prosper your exertions; my heart and soul are with you, but I have been *driven* here to

vote against you, and I *must* do it. Oh! you don't know the situation in which many of us are placed; our own people are made spies upon our preaching, and even our social conversation; elders are sent to watch our movements at Synod; our pulpits would be closed against us if we gave the slightest opposition to these abominable Overtures; and you know my narrow circumstances, and the helpless family looking to me for education and for bread!" The unhappy victim burst into tears, and hurried into a narrow passage to escape observation.— And are these "the fruits of the Spirit?" Are such, the means by which the cause of Truth is to be advanced? We would not, to be lords of this green earth, have upon our souls, the awful responsibility, of having reduced that poor man, and many of his brethren similarly circumstanced, to the deplorable condition in which they stand. Yet those who have thus degraded them, talk of "the parity," or equality, "of Ministers, as one of the fundamental principles of the Presbyterian Church!" Is it not a solemn mockery, to praise a principle in *words*, and trample upon it in *practice*? As illustrated in the Synod of Ulster, at this moment, "the parity Ministers," has no parallel but in the happy *equality* of West India Planters and their Slaves. Since the days of Constantine, no Church was ever so completely priest-ridden and degraded. It lies prostrate under the iron despotism of a petty Junto, or Oligarchy, having no claim to respect, and no title to authority—men mutually jealous and distrustful of each other; having creeds as diversified as the motley vestments of Harlequin, ranging from the deadly white of infidelity, through all the intermediate hues of Trinitarianism, Socinianism, Sabellianism, Arianism and Arminianism, up to the dark crimson of Calvinism; sinking their reciprocal contempt and disgust in their common lust of power; with no bond of union but their mutual desire to be "called Rabbi," and no common faith, but their belief in the unbounded credulity of the multitude. The members of this "Unholy Alliance," by wheedling, threatening, and clamour, have annihilated the once boasted liberty of Presbyterianism, and substituted in its room the most absolute ecclesiastical tyranny. Their brother Ministers *dare not*, under penalty of *deprivation*, preach any Doctrine, however true in their own estimation, different from certain Dog-

mas prescribed by their "spiritual masters;" nay, they must positively *teach* those Dogmas, even should they in their hearts and souls believe them to be *opposed* to the word of God: Students must *profess* their unfeigned assent, and consent, to all the mysteries of Calvinism, even *before* they commence the *study* of Divinity: Candidates for License and Ordination, must submit to have "their hearts *probed*," by a secret Conclave, against whom complaint must be not only unavailing but destructive; as the accused, with the entire patronage and control of the Church in their hands, give evidence in their own favour, act as their own advocates, and sit as their own judges: and, finally, the People are not permitted, over the wide extent of Ulster, and some portion of the other provinces, to *hear* or to *choose* any Minister, who has not submitted his neck to the yoke of bondage, who does not agree to teach what is commanded by a few of his erring fellow-mortals, and who does not bear upon his forehead the deep brand of a degrading submission. We defy the records of Popery, or Prelacy, or any other form of ecclesiastical Domination, to furnish a parallel to the present enslaved and abject condition of the Synod of Ulster, in its Students, Licentiates, Pastors, and People. Other tyrannies may be venerable from their antiquity, or respectable from the learning, character, and sincerity associated with them; or in some degree pardonable from the darkness and circumstances of the times in which they originated; but, the petty tyranny of the Synod of Ulster, which will stand as a blot upon the page of the nineteenth century, does not possess one single redeeming quality. Worthless in its origin, treacherous in its progress, and destructive in its aims, it equally merits the scorn of the wise, and the disapprobation of the good.

It possesses, however, one feature so *unique*, so perfectly its own, that its very singularity excites our wonder. We do not mean its hollow canting about "the love of souls, and its desire to advance the cause of evangelical truth"—for this has been the prominent feature of all tyrannies, Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant—but we allude to its amazing cant about "Liberty!" Yes, Christian Reader, will you believe it? When the whole Presbyterian Synod of Ulster lies prostrate in the dust; when Ministers, and Candidates, and

People, are bound together by one chain of ignoble servitude; when none dare to *preach*, and none will be permitted to *hear* any doctrine but such as are doled and meted out to them by their “spiritual lords;” when all orders are thus in a state of abject thralldom, to which Popery is comparative freedom, and Prelacy is perfect liberty—in this very depth of their degradation, their *masters* have come forward with a heartless irony, and, treading upon their very necks, addressed them in these memorable words:—“PRESBYTERIANS OF ULSTER, WE TELL YOU, YE ARE FREE!” Oh! was it not enough, to fetter them with chains, without coming forward thus to mock them in their dishonour, and insult them in their captivity? “*Ye are free!*” To do what? Why, *to think!* Your gracious masters have not deprived you of the privilege of *thought!* But, if you dare to *speak* what you *think*, or to *act* upon your *convictions*, contrary to the will of your “sovereign lords,” WE *tell you, ye are SLAVES!* “Ye are free”—to do exactly what your tyrants *please!* Beyond this, you dare not move one hairbreadth, or your doom is sealed—“ye shall no longer be continued in fellowship with this Church!” Verily, the man who ventured to call this “LIBERTY,” must possess no ordinary command of countenance; and would be well fitted, in the language of the Prophet, “to call good, evil, and evil, good!”

There is, however, another still more extraordinary circumstance connected with this affair. The masters have not only told the laity, that they “are free,” but many of the people either seem so stultified as to believe them, or so debased by bondage as to be indifferent to freedom. We know, however, the means, by which this abject prostration of the intellect and spirit has been effected. Some one has said, that “the love of liberty is natural to all men;” and we shrewdly suspect, that the love of *tyranny* is not less natural. The West-India slave, who is exalted into the merciless driver of a gang of his brethren, glories in the thralldom that gives him power over his fellows: the sycophantic toad-eater, who fawns, and crouches, and moulds his very features to suit the caprices of his patron, is more than recompensed for his degradation, by the privilege of insulting some meaner dependents. This is too general a failing with men: they barter their own liberty for the power of

tyrannizing over others. And thus, precisely, the matter stands in the Synod of Ulster. "Submit to us," say a clerical Junta, to the People, "and we will enable you, not only to rule your own Teachers, but also to have a full share in the general domination of the Church." The offer is accepted with avidity, the bait is swallowed without perceiving the barbed hook—and the slaves of a Cabal, become the tyrants of their brethren. Nothing can be more ingenious than this arrangement, by which the people are deluded, through the influence of their worst passions, with the idea that they are promoting their own interests, and extending their own power, whilst in reality, they are only the tools of ambitious men, who employ them in the degrading work of forging fetters for themselves, and for their children. For these acts of suicidal folly, we do not blame the great body of the people: they are blind-led, and do not perceive the consequences of their proceedings. In due season, however, when the delirium of the present theological fever shall have passed away, they will be in a condition for serious thought and calm investigation. Our Publication shall be faithfully devoted, to their establishment in soundness of heart and mind; and, though we are aware, that many of our patients are perverse, and that every art will be used to prevent them from receiving our medicine, by designing persons who call it "poison," we do not despair of effecting innumerable cures. Let it not be supposed, however, that our confidence rests on any overweening opinion of our own skill. God forbid! Our entire trust is placed in the divine efficacy of that medicine which has been prescribed for "the healing of the nations," by the Great "Physician of Souls." This, and this *alone*, we shall administer with unshrinking fidelity; humbly imploring the blessing of Heaven; and confident, that the issue will redound to the glory of that All-merciful Being, "who maketh even the wrath of man to praise him."

We intended to have closed these desultory observations, with "An Address to the Presbyterians of Ulster, concerning the delusions under which many of them labour, the means by which they have been deceived, and the degrading human thralldom in which they are held;" but this we must defer until our next Number. In the mean time, we trust, that if any expressions, bordering

upon undue severity, *have* escaped us, or shall be uttered in future articles, they may be considered as the *involuntary* emanations of spirits deeply wounded by unjust reproach and unmerited injuries. We do not pretend to be exalted above the feelings and the failings of humanity; but, we pledge ourselves, that we shall do all in our power, under trying circumstances, to preserve a tone and temper becoming the Gospel.

A REVIEW OF SOME MODERN SYNODS.

It is strange that, of all descriptions of men, Divines should profit least by experience: that our teachers should be the least teachable. The children of this world are growing wiser in their generation every day; and all the arts of life are in rapid progression. Astronomy has discarded Astrology; Chemistry has cast off Alchymy; Natural Science has renounced Occult Qualities; and Metaphysics, Scholastic Disputations; but Theology is still enveloped in Superstition and Mystery, Bigotry and Controversy. In all other branches of knowledge, the world may be said to be growing older and wiser; but Divinity is still in childhood, and leading strings, reciting the catechism of her infancy, and dependent on her old tutor, the Wisdom of Antiquity. The whole of Theology is contained in one small volume, which has been illustrated by the labours of the wisest, most learned, and pious men, particularly within a century past; and all difficulties, as to language, manners, customs, and ancient opinions, have been clearly explained. Of course, the scope and intention of the writers may be easily ascertained. Still, Divines "will not come to the light," but hide themselves in the obscurity of the dark ages, and shoot their poisoned arrows at "the Children of Light." Ignorance is their "shield of Faith," impenetrable to the darts of Truth. *Nil scire, tutissima Fides.*

History has been called an old almanack, and ecclesiastical history well deserves the name. It is a detail of councils and synods, frivolous controversy, and scholastic jargon, revolving in "one dull round," except when diversified by Religious wars, and illuminated by the flames of burning Saints and Martyrs, thrilling our souls

with admiration and horror, or of Fanatical Madmen, who should have excited only the pity of their persecutors. Still it has its use ; for there are seasons in which even these abominations may warn us against the inroads of Imposture, Bigotry, and Spiritual Tyranny. The uniformity of these narratives, and the resemblance between the characters and transactions of former times, and those of the present day, may also put us on our guard against the insidious arts of Contemporaries ; and strengthen our attachment to the cause of Religious Liberty, and to its friends. These objects I shall keep in view, while giving an account of some modern Synods.

In the year 325, the Council of Nice was assembled, to determine, whether the son was as old as his father ; and, after 15 centuries, the same curious question is still the bone of contention. Soon after, all Christendom fell under the despotic dominion of Popes and Patriarchs ; and all disputes were silenced, except among individuals, or between the Pontiffs of Rome and Constantinople. But as soon as Luther broke loose from his Augustinian convent, and brought with him the doctrines of his patron saint, the war began again. This was exactly 1200 years after the Council of Nice. When the first centenary of years, from the Reformation, came round, in 1617, it found the United Provinces of the Netherlands in a state of tumult and distraction, and all the reformed churches of Europe taking part in their dissensions, all about some of those notions of Luther and Calvin which they had borrowed from a Popish Saint. These are now exalted to the rank of *Fundamental Principles of the Reformation* ; but they are only its dregs. The genuine spirit has evaporated. They have no more right to this title, than Consubstantiation and the Real Presence, for which Luther contended, with such pertinacious obstinacy, and intolerant zeal. The Church of England might as well lay claim to this title for her mitres and lawn sleeves, her copes, hoods, and tippets, in which she made her precipitate escape from Rome. But “ the night is far spent : the day approacheth. Let us, therefore, cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light.”

But why do those old-fashioned prejudices exist so long ; why are they permitted to continue, in the light of Learning and Truth ; why are they suffered to af-

front and disgrace this enlightened age? Simply, because, since the Reformation, they have formed part of every Creed and Confession, Prayer Book and Catechism. Men will believe any thing that they have been taught in their childhood, and have heard continually repeated on solemn occasions. This is the case in Popery as well Protestantism, and in all the abominations of the Hindoos, as in the Christian Church.

Ireland was not, at that time, in a condition to join in this spiritual warfare; for the Scotch Presbyterians were only beginning to form their settlement in Ulster; but when another century arrived, they were ready to display their zeal in the same cause, and excluded the advocates for Religious Liberty, or the Presbytery of Antrim, from their Synod, in 1726; and now again, lest a century should pass without a similar scene of Intolerance and Persecution, they have forced the Remonstrants to withdraw from their pale; and are employing every insidious art, to sow discord in their congregations. This contentious spirit, then, which first appeared in the former part of the 4th century, but was suppressed till the 15th, has broken out nearly at the same period in the 16th, 17th, 18th, and 19th. Would to God, that it would take another period of repose, and lie dormant, till its regular time, in the 20th, when, I trust, a Spirit of Liberty and Christianity will have taken its place.

Having pointed out the regular intervals between the paroxysms of this controversial mania, I shall compare the symptoms at the several returns of the complaint, though I despair of being able to ascertain any mode of cure. If, however, the present crisis can be checked, perhaps the next may not be so violent. This disease bears a strong resemblance to canine madness. The patient is always snapping at those who come near him, and often infects with his venom, persons, who had not the least tendency to it before.

The great stimulant, in this complaint, is party spirit. These unhappy people pretend, and would fain have others believe, that they are actuated, not to say inspired, with zeal for the honour of God, and the salvation of souls; while, to use the words of John Wesley, "they represent God as worse than the Devil, more false, more cruel, more unjust;" and consign all mankind, except their

own party, to everlasting burnings. This factious spirit appeared in the Corinthian Church, when Paul wrote his first Epistle ; and he rebukes it sharply : “ While every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ, are ye not carnal ? ” This was pure faction ; for no difference existed among these holy men. The same spirit prevails at this day : one saying, I am of Athanasius, and I of Arius ; I of Calvin, and I of Arminius. It not only inspires a sharpness and eagerness of spirit, but also contempt and coldness towards those whom we suppose outcasts from God, “ and hated by him from all eternity.” The effect is felt in the most intimate connexions. It causes old friends to look on each other with distrust and suspicion, and it dissolves the ties of blood. Children lose affection for their parents, and love for one another. It extinguishes all respect for talent and learning, approved piety, and distinguished virtue. The meanest and most ignorant partisan is valued above the most pious and exemplary christian. Even on questions depending purely on critical knowledge, there is no more attention paid to the opinion of men, acknowledged to excel in such studies, than to the mere sciolist, who takes the favourite or popular side of the argument.

When Divines, of this temper, congregate in Synods, this acrid spirit is concentrated. It is a common observation, that public bodies have neither conscience nor shame. Each individual lays claim to all the merit of the whole ; but the demerit of the corps is so minutely divided among the members, that the portion of each is hardly discernible ; and, if perceived, may be easily screened by the example and authority of a multitude. Thus we see men collectively commit crimes without remorse, and practice artifices without shame, which individually they would abhor and despise. I fear that these remarks apply to assemblies of Divines in common with others.

This spirit of party operates on their faith as well as their charity. Though every individual may be conscientiously attached to his principles, and most tenaciously bigotted to his prejudices, yet, when under the influence of this spirit, and united with others in pursuit of a common object, he will become wonderfully accommodating,

and readily sink his opinions to gratify his antipathies. Instances of this may occur in the sequel of these papers. In fact, I have no doubt, that this perfidious and impious compromise takes place in every Synod, which undertakes to agree upon a system of doctrine. I believe that every reader of ecclesiastical history, or attentive spectator of recent transactions, will see cause to suspect that men, from love for uniformity and popularity, or fear of singularity and discredit, often swallow, how ill soever they may digest, doctrines, to which they have stronger objections than they have to those which they condemn and anathematize. When honest men differ on any important subject, they may be reconciled by the conviction of one of the parties. If neither can be convinced, they will continue and agree to differ. But Divines of the most inconsistent opinions, will unite in one pack to run down some unfortunate heretics. Thus we have seen Calvinists and Arminians, Presbyterians and Methodists, leave all their dissensions in abeyance, and suppress, or concede to each other their most favourite prejudices, while engaged with the common enemy; and when the war is over, begin again to worry one another. But how all this can take place, without the basest hypocrisy, dissimulation, and bad faith, I cannot understand; especially as their mutual differences are often more important than those for which they would persecute an adversary to death. While thus combined, they compliment each other on their sanctity; and agree, that they are all regenerated, sanctified, and influenced by the Holy Spirit. But how the "self same Spirit" can infuse predestination into one, and free will into another; reprobation and arbitrary election into the Calvinist, and free grace and free will into a Wesleyan Methodist, and contention and discord into all, is another point which remains to be explained. They will say, I suppose, that the end sanctifies the means, and the means are ordained of God as well as the end; and thus, as usual, lay the whole burden of their sins upon their Maker.

John Wesley is, I should think, generally allowed to have been a sanctified man. None of our Predestinarians, I imagine, would presume to withhold from him the right hand of fellowship. Yet with what fervent eloquence does he declaim against predestination!

“Call it by whatever name you please, Election, Preterition, Predestination, or Reprobation, it comes in the end to the same thing. The sense of all is plainly this : by virtue of an eternal, unchangeable, irresistible decree of God, one part of mankind are infallibly saved, and the rest infallibly damned—it being impossible, that any of the former should be damned, or that any of the latter should be saved. But if this be true, then is all preaching vain. It is needless to the elected ; for they, whether with preaching or without, will infallibly be saved : and it is useless for them that are not elected, for they cannot possibly be saved. So that, in either case, our preaching is vain, and your hearing is also vain. It also tends to destroy that holiness, which is the end of all the Ordinances of God. That these shall go away into everlasting punishment, and those into life eternal, is no motive to him to struggle for life, who believes that his lot is cast already. You will say, ‘but he knows not whether it be for life or death?’ What then? This helps not the matter: for if a sick man knows that he must unavoidably die, or unavoidably recover, though he knows not which, it is unreasonable for him to take any physic at all. He might justly say, (and so I have heard some speak, both in bodily sickness and in spiritual) ‘If I am ordained to life, I shall live; if to death, I shall die; so I need not trouble myself about it.’

“This uncomfortable doctrine directly tends also to destroy our zeal for good works. It cuts off one of the strongest motives to all acts of bodily mercy, such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and the like, viz. : the hope of saving souls alive. For what avails it to relieve their temporal wants, who are just dropping into eternal fire? ‘Well, but run and snatch them as brands out of the fire.’ Nay, this you suppose impossible. As this doctrine tends to overthrow the whole Christian revelation, so it makes it contradict itself; for it is grounded on such an interpretation of some texts, as flatly contradicts all the other texts, and, indeed, the whole scope and tenor of scripture.

“If you ask, why then are not all men saved? The whole law and the testimony answer: not because of any decree of God; not because it is his pleasure they should die; for ‘as I live (saith the Lord,) I have no plea-

sure in the death of him that dieth.' Whatever be the cause of their perdition, it cannot be his will, if the oracles of God be true, for they declare, 'He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.' 'He willeth that all men should be saved.' And they declare what is the cause why all men are not saved : so our Lord expressly : 'You *will* not come unto me, that ye may have life.' 'The power of the Lord is present to heal them, but they will not be healed.' 'How often would I have gathered you together, but you *would* not?'

"It is also a doctrine, full of blasphemy,—of such blasphemy as I should dread to mention, but that the honour of our Gracious God, and the cause of Truth will not suffer me to be silent. This doctrine represents our blessed Lord, as a hypocrite, a deceiver of the people, and void of common sincerity. For it cannot be denied that he every where speaks, as if he was willing that all men should be saved. Therefore, to say he was not willing that all men should be saved, is to represent him as a mere hypocrite and dissembler. It cannot be denied, that the gracious words which came out of his mouth, are full of invitations to all sinners. To say, then, that he did not intend to save all sinners, is to represent him as a gross deceiver of the people. Ye cannot deny that he saith, 'come unto me *all* ye that are weary and heavy laden.' If, then, ye say he call those who cannot come ; those that he can make able to come, but will not, how is it possible to describe greater insincerity? You represent him as mocking his helpless creatures, by offering what he never intended to give. You describe him as saying one thing and meaning another, as pretending the love that he had not. Him in 'whose mouth there was no guile,' you make full of deceit, void of common sincerity ; then especially, when drawing nigh to the city he wept over it ; you represent him, (which who could hear?) as weeping crocodile's tears ; weeping over the prey, which he himself had doomed to destruction. Such blasphemy this, as one would think might make the ears of a Christian tingle.

"This is the blasphemy contained in the *horrible decree* of predestination ; and here I fix my foot. On this I join issue with every asserter of it. But you say, you will

prove it by Scripture. Hold : what will you prove by Scripture ? That God is worse than the Devil ? It cannot be. Whatever that Scripture proves, it never can prove this : whatever its true meaning be, this cannot be its true meaning. Do you ask, what is its true meaning, then ? If I say, I know not, you have gained nothing. But this I know, better it were to say, it had no sense at all, than to say it had such a sense as this : It cannot mean, whatever it mean else, that the God of Truth is a liar. Let it mean what it will, it cannot mean that the Judge of all the World is unjust : No Scripture can mean, that God is not Love, or that his mercy is not over all his works ; that is, whatever it prove, the Scripture cannot prove Predestination.”—*Sermons by John Wesley, Vol. II. Sermon LIV.*

On the whole, Councils, Synods, Convocations and Assemblies of Divines, or by whatever other name they are called, have always been, and still are, the main obstacles to the progress of true Religion. When these dull, opaque bodies *rule in the ascendant*, they eclipse the Sun of Righteousness and the light of life—hide from mortal view the day spring from on high—and

“ Disastrous twilight shed

“ O'er half the nations.”

ERASMUS.

The next Article will treat of the Synod of Dort.

STRICTURES ON SOME PASSAGES OF “ THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN.”

“ THE Orthodox Presbyterian ” has made its appearance in three numbers ; and when I first read its motto, “ Beloved, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints,”—I expected a Protestant periodical :—For it is not easy for a plain man to conceive, that any other faith was delivered unto the saints, than that which is contained in the Holy Scriptures. To contend for the sufficiency of these, as a perfect rule of faith and practice, is the grand pillar of the Reformation, and the very one by which every Protestant professes to stand, when assailing the human autho-

rity of Papists. But it seems that all human authority, in matters of faith, is to be condemned in *them*, while a great deal in *Protestants* must be praised. Let the Jew add to his faith in the Old Testament, his belief in the New; let the Hindoo lay aside what are called his sacred books, and adopt both the Old and the New; let the Mahometan reject his Koran, and follow their example; and let the Roman Catholic disown all human creeds and human authority in matters of belief, and cling to the *Bible*, and the Bible *only*, and surely every *consistent* Protestant will acknowledge them as embracing “*the faith* which was once delivered unto the saints.” But if these men, in throwing off the yoke of human authority, erect human standards;—if the Jew erect *a talmud*, as the only key by which the ancient prophecies are to be interpreted; if the Hindoo erect *twenty articles*, by which every thing sacred must be expounded; if the Mahometan erect *a creed*, mixt with quotations from the Scriptures and from the works of the prophet of Mecca; and if the Roman Catholic enforce *overtures*, requiring the worship of the Virgin Mary and belief in Transubstantiation, I ask, where is the *sufficiency* of the HOLY SCRIPTURES and the *right of private judgment*? Where is the consistency of those men, who first, in *words*, proclaim the perfection of the Scriptures as a standard of faith, but who afterwards, in *works*, declare their imperfection? If the Scriptures do not contain the whole of evangelical truth, where shall we learn it? If a belief in them will not satisfy the church, nor be a bond of union among Christians, what should satisfy, or what should be a bond of union? If every man will erect his interpretation into a standard, how many standards shall we have, and what will become of the private judgment of his neighbour! If the Scriptures, which are “so plain that he who runs may read,” be liable to different interpretations, where is the human creed that is not much more so? The Scriptures are “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works;” and, while it is the duty of every man, more especially of every Minister, to direct the attention of his fellow creatures to their contents, let him tremble at erecting his “carnal reasonings,” to use an orthodox phrase, into a rule, standard, or confession.

It has, more than once, been remarked in my hearing, that there never were before exhibited, in so many pages, so much priestcraft, so many misrepresentations and falsehoods, as are contained in the 108 pages of "The Orthodox Presbyterian," now in circulation. While I may not be prepared to go all this length, I am inclined to think, that the writers of different articles, must take refuge for consolation, in the opinion, that some men may *fall* from the truth though they cannot *finally* perish. In the first article (p. 6.) it is stated,—"*The sufficiency of Scripture* we acknowledge in all the length and breadth of the principle. Whatever is taught in Revelation, so far as we know it, we shall maintain; any thing not taught there, we reject." There is not a true Protestant in Christendom, but who will glory in these two sentences. But how marvellous is it, that "The Orthodox Presbyterian" has departed from the text, in the very same page that announces it. In place of confining men to the Bible, and the Bible only, it is to be ascertained "whether the members of Church courts and Congregations hold the doctrines of the Bible, by means of an Examination Committee, or a Confession of Faith." This, in plain English, is declaring the *sufficiency* and the *insufficiency* of the Scriptures, in the same breath. This inconsistency is not more strange than the argument, if such it may be called, that is resorted to in vindication of the opinion, "Our contest is not for the mere *letter*, but the *principles* of the Bible." Indeed! Who gave the advocates of "The Orthodox Presbyterian" such quick-sightedness, that they can see through the *letter* into the *principles* of that sacred volume, with a clearness that no other Protestants dare pretend to? Will the mere *letter* of their *Confession of Faith*, be more *spiritual* than the letter of the *Bible*? Is the *letter* of the Bible a *dead letter*, unless the *principles*, which "The Orthodox Presbyterian" chooses to attach to it, be adopted by every member of the church? Wonderful presumption! What attempts at infallibility! Bad as this argument is, the next one is still more puerile: "The man who will maintain, that drawing up a Confession of Faith in the words of men is a violation of the sufficiency of Scripture, on the ground that the truth is better expressed in the Bible, must, to be consistent with himself,

object to all expositions of the Scriptures, and particularly abstain from preaching, as all he can say is better expressed in the words of Scripture." This is not even plausible, and shows a great anxiety to make things appear *similar* that are totally *different*. Whatever may be the fate of expositions and preaching, I assert, that Jesus Christ and his inspired Apostles have expressed, both in *letter* and *principle*, the will of God to the children of men, in clearer and better words than can even now be used by any of those who enjoy the advantage of the Scriptures. But when an expositor, or a preacher, directs the minds of an audience to a particular passage of Scripture, by endeavouring to point out its beauty, utility, or importance, I never knew, until I read "The Orthodox Presbyterian," that all his illustrations and comments were to be considered a *Confession of Faith*, to which his hearers were to subscribe. For preachers to avow their opinions respecting a passage of Scripture, is one thing, and to insist on those opinions being erected into a rule of Faith to their brethren, is quite another thing. I have often profited by having my mind directed to a particular text by a preacher, though I could not have subscribed to his view of it. A barrister, in addressing a judge and jury, may influence them to see more clearly the meaning and bearing of a particular act of parliament, but I have never heard of any barrister who attempted to establish his pleadings into statute law. Indeed, it is remarkable, how often men carry weapons to beat themselves; for, if "The Orthodox Presbyterian" be correct, a Confession of Faith, by giving a fixed and infallible interpretation of every chapter and verse in the Bible, would, according to his own statement, render all preaching not only unnecessary but superfluous.

"We are well aware," continues this article, "that men have professed to believe the Bible, who, in the judgment of the whole Catholic Church, rejected all its distinguishing doctrines." I am always alarmed when any Presbyterian, Orthodox or otherwise, appeals to *numbers* in vindication of his tenets; convinced that this rule, if set up as a criterion for truth, will drive him from Presbyterianism into Prelacy, and from Prelacy into Popery, and so on, until he lands in Heathenism itself.

Luther and Calvin dare not have made this appeal in religion, nor Newton and Locke in philosophy. Nor could Christianity or the Reformation have ever succeeded, if such a rule had been acted upon. "The Orthodox Presbyterian" may be aware of this and that, but I am aware, that if you cannot catch the conscience of a Protestant by the Bible, all the human creeds and confessions "in the whole Catholic Church," will not bind him. If he profess to believe the Bible, and do not, he is ten thousand times more likely to sport with all human authority. But if he believe the Bible, a regard to his own salvation will influence him to embrace, to the best of his judgment, "all its distinguishing doctrines." These doctrines, whatever they are, he will find in the Bible, and the Bible only; and if any one think he has not discovered them, it will be kind to point them out in the words of the Bible. If such a person, however, pretend to be wise, "above that which is written," he may be a knave or a fool, but a genuine Protestant he cannot be.

This periodical has very complex ideas on the right of private judgment, and makes a merit of a liberty it cannot prevent: "On the right and duty of private judgment, we trust our pages will never encroach. No man has a right to tread upon it, for the ground is sacred; and no man has a right to part with it, for the birthright is inalienable." How is this boasting exemplified? Why, "A member of the Roman Catholic Church comes to me, (says "The Orthodox Presbyterian,") and, on the ground of private judgment, demands admission into the Church of which I am a member. I refuse it, not because I will tread upon his right of private judgment," (wonderful kindness,) "but because I will not be responsible for what I consider his erroneous judgments." "The Orthodox Presbyterian" should know, that a member of the Roman Catholic Church could not make such an application; for the moment he made it, on the ground of private judgment, that moment he ceased to be a Roman Catholic. And "The Orthodox Presbyterian" should further know, that his refusal of such a man would be a species of mastery in the Christian Church approaching to Popery, and utterly incompatible with discipleship. It would be legislating in the room and stead of Christ, and usurping the authority that belongs

to him alone. If a man come to any Protestant, on the ground of private judgment, and avowing his belief in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as a perfect rule of faith and practice, I ask, by what authority any disciple of Christ has a right to demand more? It is because the Church of Rome demands more, that every Protestant complains of her usurpation and dictation. I cannot think that "The Orthodox Presbyterian" is in earnest about his responsibility for the erroneous judgment of those admitted into his church. If such be his situation, his account will be large, and very mixed with the Orthodox themselves. Perhaps he had better allow every man to "be fully persuaded in his own mind,—and to bear his own burden."

His next illustration is very curious. "A Unitarian offers himself to me as a candidate for communion: I tell him he rejects what I consider the leading doctrines of Christianity. He insists to be admitted on the ground of private judgment: I tell him that I will not interfere with his private judgment; but I will not permit him to profess, what I think, his erroneous faith, in my name, and under my authority." To any person who attends to the expressions,—*offers himself to me,—I will not permit him,—in my name,—of my authority*, it will appear "incontrovertibly clear," that "The Orthodox Presbyterian" is a rank Papist. *Offers himself to me!!* "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." *I will not permit him!!* "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own Master he standeth or falleth." *In my name!!* "And he said, take heed that ye be not deceived; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them." *Of my authority!!* "But be ye not called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.—Nor for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy."

If "The Orthodox Presbyterian" will not, and dare not *encourage* the Unitarian, let him not dare to *interfere*, when the Unitarian is about to commemorate the death of that Master whom he loves, and whose Gospel he vindicates with such power, that "The Orthodox Presbyterian" flies to his arguments when refuting sceptics

and unbelievers. He dares not interfere in the solemn exercise of prayer and praise, and why in the duty of communion? All exhortation is fair, and all warning may be useful; but any positive interference between the master and his disciple, is a violation of Christian charity towards the one, and a usurpation of the authority of the other. Indeed, I question much, if "The Orthodox Presbyterian" would act upon his own *egotism*. If I be not much misinformed, some shepherds, as anxious for the health of the sheep as himself, and as professedly Orthodox, not only admit Unitarians to their church, and to the communion, but would have risked themselves among whole flocks of them, no doubt without any regard to the fleece, and to convince them, I suppose, that they should not profess any erroneous faith in their name, and under the sanction of their authority!

"As for liberality, we wish," says this extraordinary publication, "to be thought, and in reality to be genuine Catholics. We will acknowledge every man who holds the Head, Jesus Christ. Whether he be Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Independent, if he only holds the Head, we acknowledge him 'as a brother.'" The first sentence of this paragraph wants a word;—it should be genuine *Roman* Catholics; for any church that sets up in any degree human authority in matters of faith, cannot, with consistency, complain of another church that sets up a greater degree—the higher the degree the greater the faith required. To be sure, "The Orthodox Presbyterian" is very modest in his demand, for, giving up *uniformity* as a *hopeless case*, he only claims dictatorship in one particular point. It is no matter whether you believe the five points of Calvinism, or the five points of Arminianism, he will concede these, and even the *divine right* of Presbytery, and acknowledge you as a brother, if you will but accept of such a Head for the Church as he may appoint by his human test or overture. "Who-soever believeth that Jesus is the *Christ*, (the *Messiah*,) is born of God,"—and Jesus as such—is the Head which is frequently mentioned in the New Testament; and those who have forsaken the Gospel for human standards, have never agreed among themselves. Perhaps "The Orthodox Presbyterian" has found out a Head for the Christian Church that is not mentioned in the New Testament,

and that will reconcile the Orthodox among themselves, whose opinions have hitherto been as various as possible. But why do I *suppose*, for, from his own declaration, —“ the solemn assurances of Christ and his Apostles, are our *directory* in this, as in every other part of Christian duty,”—I am bound to believe, that he will, in *future*, be guided by the words of Jesus and his Apostles.

“ The Orthodox Presbyterian” seems frightened at a circumstance that should never alarm any man, who is sound in the faith. “ We fear, (says he, p. 8,) there is a spurious liberality, in these times, which can extend the right hand of fellowship alike to infidelity and Christianity. One thing we have observed, that some men, loud in the cry of liberality, freely associate with men who do not hesitate to pour contempt on Christianity itself, while their indignation can be restrained within no bounds against those who zealously stand by the doctrines of the Reformation.” The poor Missionary who is sent to the wild Heathen, is obliged to mix with whole hordes of them; and why should “ The Orthodox Presbyterian” be surprised at his neighbour in *making himself all things to all men, that he may gain some*. He, “ The Orthodox Presbyterian,” *refuses* one man admission into the Church, and will *not permit* another to profess his erroneous faith in it; and now he will not allow his neighbour to *associate* with any one but a *sound believer*. *One thing I have observed, that some men, loud in the cry of Orthodoxy, have brought contempt on Christianity, by the horrid doctrines which they have invented and attached to it; and have left Locke, Lardner, and Newton, and other learned Unitarians, to bring them, from human dogmas, to a personal examination and belief of the Holy Scriptures.* That the *indignation* of any Protestant “ can be restrained within no bounds against those who zealously stand by the doctrines of the Reformation,” is a cunning or ignorant confounding of the doctrines of the *Reformation* with the doctrines of *some of the Reformers*. The doctrines of the Reformation were but *two*, viz. “ the sufficiency of the Scriptures as a perfect rule of faith and practice, and the right of private judgment in the interpretation of them.” Where is the Protestant, “ The Orthodox Presbyterian” and his coad-

jutors excepted, who pours contempt on these doctrines? If "The Orthodox Presbyterian" means the doctrines of the Reformers, he must know, that, while they *agreed* on the principles of the Reformation, not *two* of them professed *uniformity*. Zuinglius, Luther, Calvin, Servetus, Erasmus, and others, professed to free themselves from the Romish See in matters of faith, and from all *human authority*, and to take refuge from the changes and tyranny of men, *in the pure and unchangeable word of God*; but there was a Cain among them, and the amiable, the learned, and the meek Servetus, who was clothed in the spirit of his Master, lost his life for his firm adherence to the principles of the *Reformation*, in opposition to the peculiar doctrines of a particular *Reformer*.

By giving a place to these observations in "THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN," you will much oblige

BETA.

ON MODERATION.

"Let your moderation be known unto all men; the Lord is at hand."

MODERATION is valuable in every department of the service of God; and the consideration suggested by the Apostle should be sufficient to ensure it on the part of Christians. And yet, how seldom has the discussion of theological subjects been conducted in the spirit of Christian meekness! One would think that the very nature of such subjects would impose the necessity of mildness and moderation on those who have been called to engage in them: whereas the very reverse has usually been the case; nor have men ever been hurried farther away from the temper and spirit of Christianity, than by the heat and virulence of theological controversy. Under the influence of a zeal, real or pretended, for the interests of Christian truth, the still greater interests of Christian charity have been shamefully sacrificed and trampled on; and men, agreeing in many, if not all the essential points of Christian doctrine, have maligned and persecuted each other, as though every thing Christian were utterly despised or forgotten! The times in which we live

cannot be exempted from a charge of this nature and too many, who take a lead in matters of this kind, seem deeply tainted with this unhappy spirit,—a spirit which, were it not discountenanced and held in check by civil authority, would probably renew those scenes of unchristian violence and aggression, by which past ages have been so often and so shamefully characterized. As it is, this evil spirit must vent itself, as we have lately seen it do, in all manner of ill names and vituperation, and the most offensive misrepresentations of the principles and views of others. Let any one trace the intolerant proceedings of the Synod of Ulster, for some years past; or let any one look into a periodical publication lately set on foot by certain members of that body, modestly appropriating to themselves the designation of *Orthodox*—and you will find these observations abundantly verified.

I have looked attentively through several of the first numbers of “The Orthodox Presbyterian,” and I find his views of controverted doctrine constantly assumed to be the absolute truth, without a single attempt to support them by the only proper authority; whilst those who presume to entertain any different views, are as constantly branded with the odious names of Arians, or Socinians, or heretics, or whatever may be thought most likely to cover them and their views with infamy. How is it, that men have the face to cry out error and heresy, without the least reference to the great standard of truth? It is much easier to miscall the doctrines they dislike, than to show their inconsistency with Scripture. This course may serve a purpose in the minds of those, and they are a numerous class, who, in a state of ignorant prejudice, are liable to be frightened, like children, by hard names which they do not understand. But doubtless there is a large portion of the community, who will at least suspend their judgment until the competent authority—the Bible, is fairly appealed to:—and with all sober-minded and intelligent Christians, it cannot fail to injure that cause, whose appeal is made,—not to the sacred word of God,—but to the prejudices and passions of weak and ill-informed men. It would badly comport with the character of “The Bible Christian” to call in any authority on doctrines of Revelation—save that of the Bible. The truths which are

plainly taught there, will be readily received by those who honestly desire to know and believe the "truth as it is in Jesus." The doctrines, which are not plainly taught there, may be safely regarded as of little importance to human salvation. I trust, therefore, it will be the business of "The Bible Christian" faithfully to separate the truths of God, laid down in holy Scripture, from the tradition and commandments of men: and to do so, at the same time, in a spirit of meekness, moderation, and candour, worthy of its name.—The contributors to the contents of this publication will doubtless not fail to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints,"—for the unadulterated doctrine of the Bible: but they will feel at the same time, that, as the servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, "they must not strive" in the spirit of contention,—“but be gentle to all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.” The spirit of Christian truth and integrity will induce "The Bible Christian" to "declare the whole counsel of God" for the salvation of sinners, as far as he knows it, on any subject brought into discussion:—but the spirit of Christian meekness will not allow him to load his opponents with opprobrious epithets, to permit their language to misrepresent their sentiments, or to cast out their names as evil. It is high time that such unhallowed instruments should be laid aside among christians. It is time they should come to a full understanding that no weapon should be wielded in the cause of revealed truth, save "the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God." There are far fewer points in controversy between the parties than may be generally thought. They relate chiefly to the nature and office of "the Son of God," whom all acknowledge as the "Saviour of sinners," but of whom none know any thing beyond what the Scriptures have declared. But, let the points at issue be what they may, no good or worthy object can be promoted on either side by the envenomed "strife of tongues." The thinking and truly Christian portion of the community will make up their judgment on far other grounds. They will look with earnest attention to the countenance which our respective views may be able to derive from the teaching of Divine Re-

velation. Let this paramount authority be fairly brought before the minds of men. Whatever is to be done for the cause of Christ, let it be done in the spirit of Christ—the spirit of Christian humility and meekness, sincerity and truth—and may God defend the right. He will make even the wrath of man to minister to his praise ; and cause our unhappy divisions to redound to his glory, and to the interests of truth and peace, in that portion of the Church of Christ with which we are connected.

J. M.

ON CHRISTIAN CHARITY.

IN the publication just commenced, practical essays are, I find, to be admitted; permit me, therefore, through you, to address such of my Christian brethren as may be induced to read it, and to request their attention to their own conduct. It is to be supposed that they are all professing Christians—that they acknowledge the truth of Christianity, and are not inattentive to its forms. But there are many such who exhibit little of the spirit of Christianity in their temper and conduct, treacherously betraying it even whilst they say *Hail Master!*—Now, whether we believe with some, that Jesus Christ is the Eternal God who took on himself the form of a man; or with others, that he is a super-angelic spirit, who appeared in the human form; or whatever opinion we conscientiously adopt from the Gospel respecting the personal dignity of our Saviour, this seems universally agreed on, that to be his followers, to be Christians, indeed, it is not enough to hold certain opinions, and to call Christ, Lord! Lord! but that our belief should influence our conduct. Does not being a Christian, consist in imitating the example of Christ; in being, like him, *meek and lowly of heart*; in being actuated by a true piety, and a regard to the will of God in all our actions; in being zealous to promote the happiness of our brethren, of every nation and religion; in being patient of injuries, and ever ready to pardon or overlook insults, in being submissive to the decrees of Providence; in having fortitude to resist temptations, and in being temperate in the use of the good things of the present life? Is not

to be a Christian, to be animated by that holy, that divine principle, which was most conspicuous in our Saviour himself, and is most insisted on in the Gospel? *Charity*; not what is usually called by that name, the mere pecuniary relief of distress, nor yet that false sensibility which, whilst it weeps over tales of fancied wo, is almost regardless of real sorrow, but that enlarged and disinterested principle which *suffereth long and is kind, envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things*;—which loveth all men without distinction of country, of colour, or of sect, and putting the simple question—“Is he not a man and a brother?”—*rejoiceth with those who rejoice, and weepeth with those who weep*. Such is the essence of Christianity, which never fails, and without which no man can be, in truth, a Christian;—without which, the most splendid talents, the greatest gifts of knowledge or of power, the most lively faith, the most vigorous mortification, nay even, what some seem to regard as a compensation for every vice, *the bestowing of goods to feed the poor*:—All these, we are told, without Charity, will profit nothing, but the possessors will be as *sounding brass or as a tinkling cymbal*. Christian, whoever thou mayst be, who readest this, ponder upon it, and apply it to thyself. If thou regardest thy Bible as thy rule of faith, acting thus, as a Christian, is far more important than the belief of any doctrine can be. Hold fast to those who preach such words of sound doctrine, and who live as they preach.—Opinions formed on disputed points may be erroneous, but he who lives as a Christian cannot be far from the Kingdom of Heaven. C. M.

To the Members of the Ballymena, Templepatrick, and Belfast Presbyteries, a Remonstrant proposes the following Queries:—

1. In declaring subscription to the Word of God to be an *insufficient* Test, without subscription to the word of man, are you not attempting to amend the “PERFECT

LAW" of God, by human additions, and to express the things regarding God *better* than in the words of God?

2. Is not the impossibility of expressing your Test in the *words* of Scripture, a clear proof that the Test itself is *unscriptural*; and that the belief of the Three Persons in the Godhead "being one and the same in substance," must be derived from some other source than the Scriptures, since in them you cannot find any such expressions?

3. How are you *assured*, that our view of the Scriptures is wrong, and that yours is certainly right; while you, at the same time, acknowledge yourselves to be *fallible*, and even your Synods to be liable to err?

4. Why do you not act with consistency, and declare yourselves infallible at once, and, of course, entitled, by your assumed claim, to teach for doctrines the commandments of men, and to lord it over God's heritage?

5. What are the fruits by which we are to know you, and the justice of this your assumed claim? Is it your creating and fomenting divisions in *our* congregations, which have ceased to belong to *you*; preaching in the bounds of our congregations, as if vacant; misrepresenting our religious opinions; desiring our people not to pay stipend to their ordained Minister, but yet to keep possession of their seats, and *fight* for them; is it judging, condemning, and exterminating from the Synod, by your Calvinistic Overtures, and afterwards endeavouring, by gross misrepresentations, to expel from our pulpits, men *as well* informed, *as* talented, and *as* pious as yourselves?

6. Are you imitating Paul, *before*, or Paul, *after* his conversion; when, by laying new chains upon the conscience, and by opprobrious epithets, &c. you first turn us out of the Synod, and afterwards persecute us for going out, by prejudicing our people against us, calling us soul-destroyers, deniers of the Lord that bought us, worshippers of a God different from yours, &c.?

7. Are you observing the golden rule of doing to others as you would that others should do to you, when you thus encroach upon our rights, malign us to our sacred charge, and thus destroy that peace, and love, and purity, and holiness, without which no man can see God; and all this, for not doing violence to our own consciences, for not *professing* to believe what we do *not* believe,—that is, for acting like honest and faithful stewards, in our Lord's vineyards?

8. In what part of the Scriptures do you find the *belief*, or the *disbelief* of the Trinitarian doctrine declared to be essential to salvation, as we find peace and holiness are? And if not so declared in God's word, on what authority do *you* make that essential to salvation, which *God* has not made so, in his word, since the Father of all is too gracious to make the happiness or misery of his sincere but simple offspring, to depend on their belief or disbelief of an incomprehensible mystery? Q.

THE REMONSTRANT PRESBYTERY OF BANGOR.

THE first stated meeting of this Body was held at Greyabbey, on Tuesday, the 12th instant. There were five Ministers and four Elders in attendance. The Rev. Mr. Blakely, of Moneyrea, preached a much admired and very eloquent discourse, on Religious Liberty, to a numerous audience. The Rev. Mr. Mulligan, of Moira, was chosen Moderator; and the Rev. Mr. Montgomery, of Dunmurry, made a most powerful speech, in vindication of the rights and privileges of Presbyterian Congregations—exposed the recent enactments devised to take them away, and the base means resorted to, in misrepresenting the opinions and conduct of such Ministers and Elders as do not submit to the new and unprecedented measures. After some additional remarks from other Remonstrants, the following Resolutions, proposed by Mr. Montgomery, and seconded by Mr. W. Kelly Bailey, were unanimously carried—viz.

“ That the General Synod of Ulster having departed from the fundamental principles of Protestantism, broken the solemn compact under which we became members of it, and departed from its own ‘ Code of Discipline,’—we hereby dissolve our connexion with that Body, and unite ourselves in the bonds of Christian fellowship, under the designation of THE REMONSTRANT PRESBYTERY OF BANGOR.

“ That the Synod of Ulster's ‘ Code’ be our guide in matters of discipline.

“ That the people under our care shall have their inalienable privileges amply secured to them, in the free choice of their Ministers, according to their own views of Christian truth.”

Mr. Watson, the Minister of the place, and who had been a Remonstrant from the time the great change took place in the Synod, addressed the congregation at considerable length, and concluded by moving a Resolution, in vindication of his and their privileges, which, after much deliberation, was carried in a crowded meeting, with the exception of a few dissentient voices. Lest any doubts should be entertained on the question, it was finally proposed, that those who were for adhering to the Remonstrants should retire at one door, and that those who were in favour of the Synod should retire at another. On a division taking place, nearly the whole congregation adhered to the Remonstrants. During the course of the proceedings, various attempts were made, by members of the old Presbytery of Bangor, to interrupt the business of the day; but they were defeated by the decided feeling of the congregation, who justly considered them as intruders.

“The Orthodox Presbyterian,” labouring in his usual calling of misrepresentation, has given a very erroneous report of this meeting. The article which contains it pretends to be written from Greyabbey; but, we have good reason to believe, that it was prepared by a *smooth preacher*, who has officiated for some time in Belfast, who has hitherto affected moderation, and who has been slyly engaged in attempting to mislead the silly and credulous. The statement begins, proceeds, and ends with a total disregard of facts.

“On Sunday the 10th inst. Mr. Watson announced,” as the article states, “that, on the following Tuesday, the Remonstrant Ministers of the Presbytery of Bangor would attend there, and that a poll should be then taken to ascertain whether the members of that congregation would adhere to the Synod of Ulster, or join with the Remonstrants.” The *fact* is, that Mr. Watson made this announcement on Sunday, the 3d of January, and when the 10th came, the consideration of the question was adjourned until the following Tuesday. This, instead of taking the congregation by surprise, as is insinuated, was giving them longer time for consideration.

Commenting on Mr. Blakely’s admirable sermon, this article states, “that had a stranger happened into the assembly, ignorant of the civil and religious advantages enjoyed by the people, he must have concluded they

were under the galling yoke of an oppressive government, and a tyrannical priesthood." The *very reverse is the fact*; for Mr. Blakely spoke in the highest terms of the civil and religious liberties that were secured to Great Britain and Ireland by the Government, and pointed out to his audience the difference between *protecting* their *own* liberties, and *interfering* with the liberties of *others*. He has no objection, we have learned, to his sermon being published; but every honest man who heard it, must be certain, that the report given of it, in "The Orthodox Presbyterian," is utterly unfounded. The attack on Mr. Blakely's sermon is followed by a gross perversion of Mr. Montgomery's very lucid and eloquent speech. The pretended Greyabbey writer says, "his address I do not wish to describe," and yet, in the very next sentence, he pronounces that "it was distinguished by bitterness and cunning." It may have been bitter to those who were exposed by his powerful arguments, and they may have deemed it cunning on account of his ingenious illustrations; but the people of Greyabbey received it as an upright and open appeal to their common sense. Mr. Montgomery did not say, that "the spirit infused, by the Synod of Ulster, into the public mind, was that of the infernal regions." He represented the persecuting members of the Belfast, Ballymena, and Templepatrick Presbyteries, as leading thoughtless and uninformed people, by their proceedings, into contentions and disputes, directly opposed to the spirit of the Gospel; and mentioned several striking instances in corroboration of the fact. The man, who could pen such a fabrication, and endeavour to father it on Mr. Montgomery, may be under the influence of the spirit, but what spirit we cannot say. He may not know what spirit he is of; but a sober-minded Christian, who will never make many pretensions, might fear that he was a *Manichean*—a person under the influence of two opposite spirits, the one *good* and the other *evil*.

Mr. Montgomery said nothing about an *Arian Minister's horse*; or about an *Orthodox stranger passing by, when the suffering animal was suspended in the cart*. He spoke of the horse of a *Remonstrant Minister*, (who is really Orthodox, but who will not join in imposing any human inventions upon fellow-ministers;) and of a man, who was formerly an *Elder* in the Minister's congrega-

tion; and truly stated, that this self-styled Orthodox Elder refused to relieve the Minister's horse, which was in danger of being strangled. The anecdote which Mr. Montgomery related, respecting one of Mr. Glendy's former hearers having refused to carry a parcel to him from the coach, is a lamentable and an awful fact. The man, who had sat under his ministry for many years, did say, "I wish he were in hell—it will never be full till he is there."

The writer, not wearied in his profession, asserts, in the case of the poll, that "the negative of the question was not put, so that in truth there was not even the semblance of a poll." This is a perseverance in iniquity which we cannot account for. The *real truth* is, that the minority were called forward by Mr. Montgomery, and told that they should be heard, and that, as members of the Congregation, they had a right to vote as they thought proper. Two members of the Congregation did come forward; one of them read a long paper, and the other spoke three or four times; and they both objected to the Congregation joining the Remonstrants. In addition to this open and public call on the members, a division, to put an end to all dispute about the relative numbers *for* and *against*, was demanded and obtained. "The Remonstrants," adds this extraordinary report, "tell us of their fair dealing; but they did not give any due notice to the people of their design, and even when they came did not take a poll, but carried their measure by clamour. They *refused permission* to the members of the Presbytery to speak in *their own Meeting-house*, or address their own Congregation." The first part of this statement has been already exposed, and as to the second, suffice it to say, that Mr. Watson to his congregation had declared himself in favour of the Remonstrants in *September*, and that the visit of the Remonstrant Presbytery was rendered necessary, only in consequence of a disgraceful plan of *slander, secret canvass, and calumny*, which had been carried on against Mr. Watson and the cause of his brethren. How preposterous, then, in the Synodical members, to talk about *their own Meeting-house*, when they know that it belongs to the *Congregation*, no matter with whom, or with what Presbytery they associate. How *bare-faced*, to cant about the "rights and privileges of the ancient and Orthodox Congrega-

tion of Greyabbey,"—"the right of election, defended and enlarged,"—when they are certain, that Dr. Stephenson, who was ordained *there fifty-five years ago*, and Mr. Watson *thirty years ago*, could not *now preach, even on trials*, without conforming to Overtures that were never heard of at Greyabbey, or elsewhere, until *two years ago*. This is the way "the Synod of Ulster *stands by the code, and confirms the code!!!*" Such a departure from truth we have seldom witnessed. The proceedings that have lately been carried on at Greyabbey, by emissaries, travelling from house to house, with *blank papers*, and prevailing with people to sign sometimes *against* Mr. Watson, and sometimes *for* him, just as they could accomplish it, and then to announce that these persons are *all* against him, is as *jesuitical* as any thing ever conducted by the inquisition itself. It speaks volumes in praise of the people, that little more than the fourth of them were seduced to sign. A decent woman, who had been imposed on by the stratagem, declared in the Meeting-house, after divine service, on Sunday se'nnight, that the emissaries made her believe she was signing *for* Mr. Watson and the Remonstrants, though they made use of her name as a person signing *against* them. They have endeavoured to poison the mind of the Landlord of the district, who is a member of the Established Church, and who has, we are persuaded, such a regard for purity of conscience, as to prevent him from using any influence which might tempt his tenantry into hypocrisy. The forcing open of the Meeting-house; the attendance of Synodical ministers in it immediately after; their voting themselves out of it, in dread of a prosecution, and leaving it locked up with new bolts and bars, would have disgraced the dark ages!!

ARMAGH PRESBYTERY.

The *facts* and *fabrications* respecting this Presbytery have been artfully mixed up by the enemies of religious liberty. A meeting of this Body was held in Banbridge on the 18th of September, when, with other Resolutions, it was carried by a very great majority, "that the Presbytery should separate from the Synod as a Body, retaining the name, and records, and privileges of the Presbytery of Armagh." This is *one fact*.

As some of the members had not attended the Banbridge meeting, the clerk was directed to write to them a friendly letter, informing them of the steps just taken, requesting them to read the Resolutions to their congregations, and to attend, with Elders, at Newry, on the 14th of October, that final arrangements might be made. This is a *second fact*.

The Synodical party, displeased with the success of the Remonstrants, and a few of them thinking Newry not a favourable town for the October meeting, instead of complying with the time and place agreed on at Banbridge, had recourse to tampering, intimidation, and pious frauds, which some have dared to call forgery, and got a requisition for a meeting at Markethill on the 13th of October. This is a *third fact*.

The Markethill meeting was the largest perhaps ever held by the Armagh Presbytery; and though the Synodical advocates had their own time and place of meeting, and a full attendance of their forces, the Remonstrants, even *there*, confirmed the Banbridge Resolutions; *fourteen* voting for, and only *ten* against. This is a *fourth fact*.

There were but *thirteen* congregations belonging to the Presbytery of Armagh, that ever had, previously to the separation, *stated pastors*; and of these, *six* of their Ministers voted for the Remonstrants, *two* sunk their votes, and only *five* voted for the Synod. This is a *fifth fact*.

Granting the advantage of the votes of the *assistant* Ministers of Clare and Markethill, and the vote of Mr. Adams, who holds a *sinecure* in the Synod, and cannot be justly called either *pastor* or *assistant*, the Remonstrants voted *six* Ministers, and the Synodical party, including their Moderator, but *seven*. This is a *sixth fact*.

Among the numerous fabrications on record, the first is, that the Remonstrants are all Arians; though they are known to be of different opinions, and do not acknowledge any human leader,—either *Arius* or *Calvin*,—CHRIST being their one and only religious Master.

The *second* fabrication is, that those who have made the calculation in favour of the Synod, have contrived to forget the *Elders* of the Armagh Presbytery in the account. The praise of these respectable gentlemen, had they voted for the Synod, would have been in, all the

Synodical Churches ; but as they thought proper to prove themselves to be *true Presbyterians*, it has been deemed wise to keep back their names, and make out a calculation without them. The Remonstrant *Ministers* alone, in all common honesty, *carried* their Resolutions ; but the *Elders* fearlessly and fairly *maintained* their *own privileges* ; *signed* and *sealed* the charter of religious liberty ; and thus, through them, the Presbytery *confirmed* the *ancient rights* of a numerous and respectable body of Presbyterian people, by a decided majority,—*fourteen* having voted for the Remonstrants, and only *ten* for the Synod.

THE REMONSTRANT PRESBYTERY OF TEMPLEPATRICK.

A meeting of this Presbytery was held at Ballycarry, on Tuesday, the 12th instant. The Rev. Mr. Campbell, of Templepatrick, preached a very valuable and impressive discourse from these words,—“ I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.” From different statements made on the occasion, it was pleasant to learn, that the ancient and best informed Presbyterians were beginning to rally round their persecuted ministers, and to defend their own olden rights, viz. :—of choosing pastors of such opinions as they shall think best, and of keeping their minds open to improvement, without binding themselves to any *human creed* or *human authority*, in matters of religion.

CLOUGH CONGREGATION, COUNTY DOWN.

THE Presbytery of Bangor did not proceed to *make out a voter's list*, upon the 17th of April last, as has been erroneously stated in “ The Orthodox Presbyterian,” for the purpose of polling that congregation for a Minister. The Presbytery only proceeded to examine the *stipend* list, then in the hands of the Committee, preparatory to a *settlement* with the *heirs* of Mr. Campbell ;—and even that was not done without due notice, for a letter from the then Moderator of Presbytery, on the subject, had been read in the Meeting-house, after divine service, to a crowded audience, on the previous Sabbath. During

an interval of four clear days, between the reading of the Moderator's letter and the meeting of Presbytery, the Congregational Committee attended in the Session-house, at different stated periods, for the receipt of *stipend*. The Presbytery of Bangor, so far from *making out a voter's list* at their meeting, only witnessed its *commencement*; and having enjoined the Committee *to keep it open*, they appointed two of their members, then present, to return to Clough in ten days, and add such persons to it as might lawfully qualify themselves in the interim. All this was done; and, when the congregation thought proper, afterwards, to request a poll for a candidate, it is well known what *undue influence* was used to injure him.

The success of this influence was felt for the moment, and brought about the rejection of the candidate. But when the respectable Presbyterians of Clough *came to themselves*, (finding they had been misled,) and wished a *new poll*, the records of the General Synod of Ulster bear proof how their application was treated. Roused to a sense of the value of their rights and privileges, they separated from the Synod, joined the Presbytery of Antrim, and have now ordained among them the object of their choice. They are numerous, happy, and free. They can *forgive*, but they cannot *forget*, the *orthodox spirit* that was manifested at Mr. Watson's ordination; and they are not surprised that a watchword has been given,—“*beware of a breach of the peace.*” People who took *fire-arms, gunpowder, cards, and ardent spirits* into the House of God, *require a little advice*, for, perhaps, they went a little beyond their instructions. The *dagger scene* at Ballycarry, is not much over this. It remains to be accounted for, how individuals voted against Mr. Watson, though they had heard him different times, because they had not heard him often enough, and yet voted for Mr. Dill, whom they had *never heard nor seen*.

Intelligence.

KILLILEAGH AND SAINTFIELD UNITARIAN CHURCHES.—A meeting of Unitarians of the parishes of Killileagh, Killinchy, Kilmore, and Saintfield, was held in Mr. Thomas Lindsay's, Derryboy, Killileagh, on Friday, the 1st of January, 1830, for the formation of a Branch of the *Irish Unitarian Christian Society*, and for other religious purposes;

Dr. Gordon, of Saintfield, in the Chair.

The following Resolutions were proposed and adopted by the Meeting :—

1. That the Unitarians of this district do henceforth constitute the Killileagh, Killinchy, Kilmore, and Saintfield Branch of the Irish Unitarian Christian Society.

2. That the particular object of this Branch be, the erection of Independent Unitarian Churches, at Derryboy and Saintfield, wherein we may worship the One God, even the Father, according to the dictates of our conscience.

3. That, in addition to aid from friends to Unitarianism in England and Ireland, the most effectual means for accomplishing this object, appear to us to be the maintaining of a succession of Religious Discourses, at both the forementioned places; the establishment of a Tract Society; the formation of a Library of approved Religious Works; and prayer to God for his blessing on our undertaking.

4. That, while we fondly cherish and endeavour to propagate within our district, the pure, rational, and Scriptural Doctrines of Unitarian Christianity, by every practicable fair means, we study to maintain, in word and deed, the utmost charity and good will towards our fellow Christians of all other denominations, and to do honour to our profession by our practice.

5. That, in the mean time, application be made for lots of building ground.

6. That, Messrs. William Stewart, Thomas Lindsay, Matthew Wilson, and James Wilson be appointed Trustees for the Independent Unitarian Church of Derryboy: and Dr. Gordon, Messrs. Hugh M'Robert, Alexander Bradley, jun. and Robert M'Farland, for that of Saintfield. (Other Gentlemen were also nominated Trustees, but not being present their names are not here inserted.)

7. That a General Fund be now established, which shall be supported by Individual subscriptions of Five Shillings annually, Congregational collections, and Donations.

8. That Mr. Alexander Bradley, Jun. be the Secretary of this Branch, for the year 1830.

9. That Mr. James Melville be the Treasurer of this Branch, for the year 1830.

10. That the following Brethren, with such other Gentlemen as they may add to their number, be the Committee of this Branch, for the year 1830, viz. :—Dr. Gordon, Messrs. William Stewart, Hugh M'Robert, Alexander Bradley, Jun. Thomas Lindsay, John Neilson, Matthew Wilson, Robert M'Farland, William Roney, and Rev. Johnson Neilson.

11. That a Report of the proceedings of our successive Committees be made, for approval, to the Annual Meeting of the Subscribers, to be held on the 1st of January, in each year; on which occasion there shall also take place an election of a Committee, Secretary, and Treasurer, for the ensuing year.

12. That the Committee, now appointed, proceed forthwith to carry the foregoing Resolutions into effect.

The Rev. Johnson Neilson, Mr. Alexander Bradley, jun. and other Gentlemen addressed the meeting at considerable length, and, when referring to the learning, talents, and virtues of the Rev. Dr

Drummond, Rev. James Armstrong, the Rev. James Martineau, of Dublin, and some Northern friends, they were much applauded.

MITCHEL'S SERMONS.—We are glad to perceive that another edition of the excellent Sermons on Scripture Doctrine, by that talented divine, and most exemplary man, the Rev. JOHN MITCHEL, of Newry, is about shortly to be published. This is due to the public, the first edition having been sometime out of print. Few works, that have issued from the press of late years, have made a more powerful impression than these unanswerable Discourses. Whether we consider the remarkably plain, perspicuous, and unassuming manner in which the simple truths of Scripture, (too often mystified by the subtlety and vain philosophy of man,) are laid before the reader, or the strain of fervent piety which runs through every page, we are not surprised that a very large impression should have been speedily bought up, and another anxiously looked for. We are gratified to understand that this edition is likely to be enriched by some *new matter*, and are quite sure any thing from the pen of the amiable author, will meet with the attention it so well deserves.—*See Advertisement.*

Subscribers.

Our Subscribers will see that we have exceeded our specified limits, by giving twelve additional pages in this Number. Nothing but the liberal encouragement of our friends, and the press of valuable matter forwarded, could have induced us to risk the consequent expense.

Correspondents.

We are requested, by the Rev. James Armstrong, of Dublin, to state, that he has received an *official communication* from the Synod of Pastors at Geneva, authorizing him to contradict, in their name, the evil reports respecting their church and people, recently spread abroad in the *Province of Ulster*. Mr. Armstrong's communication shall appear in our next Number.

We have received the commencement of a series of texts, illustrative of the principal doctrines of Christianity, which we will give in our next; and hope that they will be regularly continued, as we consider it of vast importance, that our readers should thus see, at one view, how completely our opinions coincide with the whole phraseology of the Bible.

We have just received a very interesting communication, respecting the Congregation of Glenarm, which came too late for our present Number. Our friends will much oblige us, by giving *such authentic intelligence* concerning the proceedings of those members of Synod, who are disturbing the peace, and endeavouring, at least, to destroy the happiness of Ministers much more respectable than themselves, and of people willing to live in harmony and brotherly love.

Sigma, on the Synodical Overtures, is under consideration.

The two Creeds—CALVINISTIC and ARIAN—if we have room, in our next.

THE
Bible Christian.

No. II.

MARCH, 1830.

VOL. I.

A REVIEW OF SOME MODERN SYNODS.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25.)

THE SYNOD OF DORT.

Οὐδὲ τι πού Συνοδοῖσιν ὁμοθροῶς ἐσσομ' ἐγώ γε
Χηνῶν ἢ γερᾶν, ἀκριτὰ μαρμαρέων
Εὐθ' ἐξίς. ἐνθα μῶθος τι. καὶ αἰτχρὰ κρυπτὰ παρῶθεν
Εἰς ἕνα δυσμενέων χῶρον ἀγειρομένα.

GREGORY NAZIANZEN.

Thus translated by a learned friend :

Oh ! may it never be my lot to dream
In Synods, with that noisy, factious crew
Of Geese and bickering Cranes, who hiss and scream
And chatter, with discordance ever new ;
Their senseless jargon fraught with rage and spleen,
And brooding rancour and reproaches keen.

THE first Synod, on which I shall offer some observations, assembled in 1618, at Dort, contracted from Dordrecht, a town a few miles to the south-east of Rotterdam.

The sentences printed in the Italic character will suggest to the reader some curious coincidences, partly incidental, but generally intimating a resemblance between the characters and circumstances of former times and our own.

James Harmine, better known by his Latin name, Arminius, was elected Professor of Divinity at Leyden, in Holland, in 1603. *He had met with considerable opposition from the Clergy ;* but the Curators of the University decided, "*that the Clergy had nothing to do in the appointment of Professors ; that such matters were wholly*

of their own cognizance ; and, that there had been Professors before, in the University of Leyden, who, in the business of Predestination, had not followed the notions of Calvin and Beza." His doctrine was, "that God, being a righteous Judge, and, at the same time, a merciful Father, had, from all eternity, made this distinction between the fallen offspring of man, that those, who should forsake their sins, and put their trust in Christ, should be absolved from their evil actions, and should enjoy everlasting life ; but that the obdurate and impenitent should be punished. Besides, that it was pleasing to God, that all men should forsake their sins, and, having attained to the knowledge of the Truth, continue steadfast in it ; but that he compelled no man." This doctrine was afterwards divided into five propositions, which still retain the name of the Five Points. Their subjects are Election, Redemption, Original Sin, Effectual Grace and Perseverance. The opinions of Arminius, on these subjects, were styled *New Light**. He is said to have been *a man of Truth and peace ; but more afraid of Tyranny than Schism*. The doctrine which he opposed is thus expressed in the Westminster Confession of Faith. The reader may choose between them.—“Some men——are predestinated unto Everlasting Life, and others foreordained to Everlasting Death——particularly and unchangeably——without any foresight of Faith or Good Works or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions or causes moving him (God) thereunto.”

The agitation of these questions produced immediately the most violent dissensions ; and the parties set an example, which has been faithfully followed on similar occasions, in our own country : they began with warm debates, in classes and provincial synods, as in our Presbyteries and Sub-synod, in 1722, and our General Synod at this day ; *Inquisitions into the faith of Ministers ; Tests ; Subscription ; Private slander and Pulpit defamation ;*

* A Minister being asked for a definition of *New Light*, replied—*The Old Light snuffed*. The first snuffing was by the Arminian Remonstrants, at Dort ; the second by the Non-subscribers of the Antrim Presbytery ; after which the Light shone bright and clear, and enlightened all in the house, till lately, when it grew so smoky and smouldering, as to require another snuffing from our own Remonstrants.

Divisions in Congregations and separate Meetings.—BRANDT. vol. iii. p. 28, 31. These were followed by violent ferments and frequent hostilities, till both parties called for a National Synod. About this time the Arminians presented a Remonstrance to the States of Holland, whence they got the name of *Remonstrants*; and a meeting of Calvinistic Ministers and Elders, at Amsterdam, declared for a *separation from the Remonstrants, as persons with whom it is "not lawful to hold assemblies, nor to own them for fellow-members."* Since both parties asked for a Synod, they must have been nearly equal; at least they expected a fair discussion and decision; but in this the *Remonstrants* soon found themselves disappointed.

The majority of the lower orders, which were most numerous, adhered to Calvinism; the middle class of society was more equally divided; but the higher ranks favoured the Arminians. Among these were the Magistrates of the towns, and the states or senates of the Provinces, and in particular of Holland, which was equal to all the rest. Maurice, Prince of Orange, who then possessed the power of a Stadtholder, though the title had been recently suppressed, was also friendly to Arminian principles, but was then labouring to convert into a permanent Principality, the authority vested in him as chief of the Confederacy, and, therefore, declared himself Protector of the Calvinists, as being the more numerous. To strengthen his interest, he made a progress through the towns, disbanded the warders or militia, changed the magistrates, and, by their means, ejected the principal Arminian Ministers, and imprisoned the principal patrons of that party—Oldenbarnevelt, a great statesman, who opposed the ambition of Maurice, the illustrious Grotius, Hogerbets, Van Ledenberg, and others.

Thus were the Orange party and the Calvinists combined in one faction against the Remonstrants.

Accordingly, when the Synod was convened, consisting of Commissioners of the States General, native Divines, and deputations from all the Reformed Churches, there were but three members belonging to the Arminian Party—two Ministers and one Elder. Thirteen of the Remonstrant Ministers were summoned, not as members of the Synod, but to defend their principles; to be tried for heresy, instead of deliberating on an equality, as they expected. To these, the two Ministers were forced to

attach themselves, and relinquish their seats in the Synod, before any decision was made. When summoned to plead, the fifteen Remonstrants were informed, that they might defend their own opinions, but would not be permitted to impugn the opposite doctrines. This they refused, as impracticable and unjust; protesting, that it was impossible to do justice to their cause, without discussing both sides of the questions; and that persons arraigned had a right to justify themselves in any manner that they thought best. In this refusal they persisted to the end, with immoveable firmness. *The Synod, then, proposed to examine them by interrogatories*, to which they might return answers, keeping within the bounds of the questions. This was more objectionable than the former proposal, and rejected with equal resolution. Neither persuasion, nor threats of ecclesiastical censures or civil penalties, could move them. This reduced the Synod to the greatest perplexity. If they transgressed the rules of justice and law, they feared that the Foreign Divines would not concur, and that their conduct would be stigmatized throughout Europe. If they allowed the Remonstrants to take their own way, they apprehended such an exposure of Reprobation, that horrible doctrine of Calvin, as he called it himself, (*decretum horribile fateor*,) as would occasion discord among themselves, and shock the feelings of the people.

It is evident, throughout their proceeding, that even their President was ashamed of arbitrary, irrespective Reprobation, whether supralapsarian or sublapsarian, and that he would prefer any expedient to a display of the revolting consequences of this doctrine. Some would willingly have conceded Reprobation, and confined themselves to Election; but Calvin had positively and truly decided that they are inseparable.* Predestination is the foundation of Calvinism, and Reprobation and Election, the two pillars on which it rests: you cannot remove one without overturning the other. It requires no Sampson to pull them both down; but the temple is defended by the perverted zeal of the Gazathites.

At this stage of the business, the Remonstrants agreed *to withdraw from the Synod*; to remain in their own

* *Electio, nisi reprobationi opposita, non staret; quos ergo Deus præterit, reprobat.*—CALVIN.

quarters; and not to resort to the usual place of attendance, that they might "*give no occasion for debates, or exasperations by their presence, and by declaring their Resolution; but sent a letter, giving their reasons for not complying with the orders of the Synod.*" "There was no cause," they said, "so good, that would not certainly be oppressed, if one side were permitted to tell the other: thus far, and no farther, you shall attack our doctrines." They were, therefore, anxious to exhibit both opinions *side by side*. Being ordered to attend, the President changed his plan, and began to examine them out of their own books; but they objected, that *the books were not proved to be theirs; and, even so, were written at distant times, and might differ from their present sentiments.* This accords exactly with the proceedings against the non-subscribers by the Ulster Synod in 1725. They also declared, that "they could not, with a safe conscience, engage in any other manner of treating, than such as they had proposed in their former answer." "Perceiving, therefore, that they could prevail nothing," by interrogatories, they determined to condemn them out of their books.

At this time, while the Remonstrants were necessarily absent from their churches, in attendance on the Synod, and should be under its protection, some of them were deposed from the Ministry by the Magistrates of their respective towns, and their families ejected from their dwelling-houses, one of them in most critical and distressing circumstances.

While these things were going on at Dort, there was an assembly of Ministers, Elders, and Deacons, at Rotterdam, to sympathize and co-operate with the Remonstrants. They agreed, that "the Remonstrant Communion should keep what footing they had got, and promote their doctrine as far as they could; and that *then was the time to lay the foundation of their liberty of conscience; otherwise, both they and their posterity must remain slaves to the spirit of Calvinism for ever.*" They also drew up a plan of discipline, to be observed in their Churches, and declared, "that *they owned no other rule, or test of faith, by which the truth and soundness of doctrine ought to be tried, than the holy writings of the Old and New Testament.* Some of the Remonstrants wished for nothing more, than that the contra-remonstrants would all at once condemn them and their doctrines together, and cast them all out of

their assemblies ; for then they might soon judge what would be the issue."

The last affair of importance in the Synod was to *reduce the Overtures into Canons*. In the course of this business, *there were vehement disputes, among themselves*, concerning certain "harsh expressions" in some of the Doctrinal Propositions. "A few days after the formulary of rejecting the *harsh ways* of speaking was finished in the Synod, Poppius and Neranus accidentally met with Alstedius, the Professor of Herborn, and asked him, what they had done with respect to those harsh points which were stumbling blocks to all the world? He answered, that the Synod, in their canons, would certainly have condemned the opinions of Piscator and others, if it had not been apprehended that the Provinces and States might have been animated against each other. But the Remonstrants could not see how such proceedings were consistent with the Synodical Oath, which they all took, *to judge according to the Word of God*. They durst not, it seems, out of worldly views, and considerations of an external peace, condemn those principles which they owned to be abominable ; whereas, at the same time, they made no scruple to reject, as false and intolerable, the doctrines of the Remonstrants even in the smallest matters, to the disturbance of the Constitution both in Church and State." Time-serving Polemics, of this class, generally unite upon some one point, by which they hope to make their adversaries obnoxious to public odium, such as the Trinity ; but carefully avoid discussing this central point among themselves, conscious that such a procedure would speedily disturb their concord, set them all at variance, and let the common enemy escape in the midst of their dissensions. Hence arose the difficulty, on a late occasion, of stating the question to be proposed to the Anti-trinitarians. The difficulty was to cut off the retreat of the Arians, without breaking the ranks of the Orthodox.

Among the hard sayings which the foreign Divines, at Dort, could not digest, and which threatened to break up the Synod, we may reckon the following :—

"You mean to say, that God wishes for the same thing that he professes ; but this is not always, nor in all things true."—PISCATOR.

"As to whether God always wishes what he commands

or forbids, or, in reality, wishes for what is different; nay, even for what is opposite. I deny the former and affirm the latter. As to your question, whether I think with Calvin, that grace is promised to many, to whom God, at the same time, never intends to give it, I confess I am of this opinion.”—PISCATOR.

“That God does not wish that all those should keep his commandments, to whom they are proposed, I have proved.”—PISCATOR.

“All things that are done, and, therefore, the most atrocious crimes are done by the decrees of God.”—PISCATOR.

“It was right that man should be so *created*, as to be a fit object for Divine Justice, that is, eternal damnation.”—BEZA.

The Synod concluded with depriving the fifteen Remonstrants of all offices and emoluments connected with the Universities or the Church; and the States-General banished all but one for an unlimited time. This was esteemed a hard sentence; but much may be said in mitigation. We must make allowance for the Religious prejudices of these magistrates, and their apprehensions of tumults, if the leaders of that party remained in the country and exercised their profession, after such provocations. Besides, they had offered to allow them to live where they pleased, and to give them a competence, if they would engage neither to teach nor preach, except in their own families: but this all, but one, rejected as contrary to the dictates of their own consciences, and to their engagements at Ordination. After all, the Government reimbursed them for their expenses at Dort; and gave each of them a sum for travelling charges. They were also permitted to choose the places to which they should be transported. The sentence was forthwith put in execution. The Remonstrants pleaded for time to see and provide for their families, saying—“surely you will not turn our wives and children naked into the streets.” But they were told, that “it behoved the States to take care of the many thousand souls, whom they had misled by their doctrine, which was of far greater consequence than their families. We shall, therefore, think of *them*, whatever becomes of you and yours.” I suppose it was in imitation, or by way of improvement upon this, that the Rev. Richard Dill said at a late Synod: “I would

rather leave a hundred Ministers and their families to starve, than put an unsound Minister into a congregation." When great geniuses condescend to imitate their predecessors, they delight to amplify the original idea. Instances of this occur in Homer, Virgil, and Milton. The Dills are a noted family among our *Inland Divines*.

The purpose of this paper does not require us to trace the History any further; except to observe, in general, that these proceedings were followed by a *general persecution of the Remonstrants*, in the different towns of the Union, which possessed independent jurisdiction, and were, in fact, separate Republics; though subject, as to general politics, to the General Assembly of the States. The result was the deprivation of nearly 200 Ministers, and the banishment of 80.

Before we quit the Synod, it may accord with the intention of this paper, to make some remarks on the characters of the leading Members, and the general temper of the Body. This will assist us in forming a just estimate of such Assemblies, and tracing the similarity between former times and our own.

Episcopus, the leader of the *Remonstrants*, was endowed with a rich, masculine, and overpowering eloquence. He was skillful in managing his own cause; always on his guard against the arts of his antagonist, and ready to detect his fallacies, and expose his mistakes. *Bogerman*, the head of the *Calvinistic party*, found himself secure of a prejudiced majority, and made a tyrannical use of his influence. He was rather an insidious intriguer, than a man of talent; a dexterous debater, than an eloquent man.

Episcopus was ably supported by the resolute and independent *Niellius*; who confuted and rebuked his adversary with all authority, at the risk of losing his situation, of which he was actually deprived. *Bogerman's* second was *Abraham Schultetus*, "of whom the *Remonstrants* said, that he had formerly been of very moderate sentiments, with respect to religious principles, but grew more partial to the Synod, and at last very violent in his opinions. He also seems to intimate, in the short account of his own Life, that he had not always the same notions of these things." Like other new converts, he was base enough to pronounce the most opprobrious and intolerant speeches against the *Remonstrants*, that were uttered in the Synod.—Brandt, iii. p. 116, 150.

The Remonstrant, *Neranus*, was calm and mild: the contraremonstrant, *Gomarus*, was vulgar and absurd; so disgusting to his fellows, that he called down on himself reprehension and rebuke, even from the Chair. The wit and good humour of some of the Remonstrants, formed a fine contrast with the gloomy bigotry and sombre dullness of the inland Divines, as those from the remoter Provinces were called.

Among the Calvinists, *Martinius* was uniformly moderate, charitable, and conciliatory. *Witenborgat* was a sincere and zealous Remonstrant of the same character, but did not attend the Synod, being detained at Rotterdam by infirmity and disease. He had been tutor to Grotius.

On the whole, the freedom, boldness, and ability of the Remonstrants, surprised their friends and astounded their enemies. The Lord "gave them a mouth and wisdom, which all their adversaries were not able to gainsay or resist."

The Synod of Dort was certainly the most august that was ever held among Protestants. It consisted of Commissioners from the States General, 38 Dutch and Walloon Divines, 5 Professors of the Universities, and 21 lay Elders, with 28 foreign Divines from Great Britain, and all the Reformed Churches, except France, the French King not allowing the Huguenots to send deputies. They conducted their business with great regularity; and, as Neal observes, "they proceeded as well as most Assemblies, ancient or modern, who pretend to establish Articles of Faith for other people, with penal sanctions." He adds: "King James's sending over Deputies to sit in this Assembly, was an open acknowledgment of the validity of ordination by Presbyters; for here was a Bishop of the Church of England sitting as a private member in a Synod of Divines, of which a mere Presbyterian was President." Neal had reason for his reserve, in speaking of their conduct and temper; for the President more than once got into a passion, telling the Remonstrants, that "they began with a lie, and ended with a lie; that they were full of tricks, deceits, and equivocations." "I, therefore, dismiss you," said he, "in the name of the Lords Commissioners, and of this Synod. Begone." This act of discharging the Remonstrants, without authority or previous sanction, and the

heats and irregularities which attended it, were openly condemned and censured. Some among the contraremonstrants, also, were scandalized at the passion of the President, which was so immoderate, that he could neither compose his countenance nor govern his tongue, and "he spoke false Latin several times;" for all their proceedings and debates were in that tongue. Bogerman was afterwards disgraced, and nearly banished by the States of his Province. By his sub-synod he was reproached with "pride and avarice, as wanting to be a *Primate or Patriarch* over them; and as a common enemy. They cried out: *Haman is fallen.*"

No sooner had they got rid of the Remonstrants than they began to dispute among themselves. The Reader will recollect a similar incident, of recent date, and not far from home. The first question was, "how Christ could be called the Foundation of Election." After several trifling or unintelligible distinctions, "Gomarus, from whom the whole party were created Gomarists, stood up, as soon as Martinus had done speaking, and said, 'I take this matter upon myself;' and then throwing down his glove, he challenged Martinus with the following words: 'Ecce Rhodum: ecce saltum; show now that you are a man,' and begged the Synod to let him battle it out with him. The President put an end to this by closing the Session with prayer; but as soon as prayers were over, Gomarus, nothing mollified by his devotions, renewed the challenge. However, they were parted this day without coming to blows." This broil passed in a private meeting with closed doors. But soon after, in a public Session, a quarrel arose between Bremers and Schultetus. The English Divines were requested to reconcile them: but the former would hear of nothing less than a public satisfaction. Martinus and his colleagues complained to the States Commissioners. The English also resolved to apply to the Commissioners about an affront that had been offered to the Bishop of Llandaff; for "there were two persons in the Synod, Sibrandus, and particularly Gomarus, who were capable of setting all in a combustion." This, I think, is enough to show the temper of this Venerable Council. It is observed by Brandt, that their contentions furnished amusement to the Ladies, who resorted to the meetings of the Synod "as to stage plays."

John Hales, also, styled the *ever-memorable*, Chaplain to Sir Dudley Carleton, English Ambassador at the Hague, gives a similar account. He was no friend to the Remonstrants when he wrote, but afterwards became an Arminian. "Old Sibrandus," says he, "was very hot against the auditory. There was some reason for this; for many youths, yea and artificers, and I know not what rabble beside, thrust in and troubled the place. As for women, whole troops of them have been seen there, and the best places for spectators reserved for them: which thing must needs expose the Synod to the scorn of those who lie in wait to take exception against it. But the Synod has determined to favour the Auditory."

The tones and gestures of the Reverend Fathers must have been very theatrical; for their language was unintelligible to such spectators. I trust that our own circumforaneous Synod does not afford similar entertainment to the ladies of the country towns in which they exhibit.

I subjoin some sentences, from a work of Episcopius, where he speaks of the Canons and Decrees of Councils and Synods in general, which I cannot render with equal force in English:

Ea (Symbola) ab Episcopis inter se, magna cum æmulatione jurgantibus et contendentibus ex fervore, si non furore, partium que studio insano ac maleferiato, præcipitata potius videri debent quam a compositis animis profecta. Quis enim nescit, quam acres in Synodo Nicæna disceptationes, quam præfracta jurgia inter Episcopos excitata fuerint?

By comparing the opinion of Gregory, of Nazianzum, who was born before the Nicene Council, with that of Episcopius, and both with the transactions of Ecclesiastical Bodies, since his time, the reader will be able to form a judgment of Councils and Synods in general.

I annex a summary of the principal points discussed at this Synod, taken from the Westminster Confession, as the fairest statement of Calvinistic doctrine, and from Brandt's History of the Dutch Reformation, fol. vol. iii. page 83, &c. in the words of the Remonstrants. I shall set these opposite opinions face to face, that the reader may more easily compare them.

CALVIN.

Some men and angels are predestinated to eternal life,

and others foreordained to everlasting death—particularly and unchangeably; and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished; and God hath foreordained all the means thereunto.

Those that are predestinated to life, God, before the foundation of the world, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, without any foresight of faith or good words, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions or causes moving him thereunto.

ARMINIUS.

God never decreed to elect any man to eternal life, by his mere will and pleasure, before he had decreed to create him, without any respect or regard to his previous obedience or disobedience: nor ordain such means, whereby both the elect and the reprobated should forceably and unavoidably attain their appointed end: nor did he ordain the Fall, or the permission of it.

CALVIN.

The first pair being the root of all mankind, the guilt of their sin was imputed, and the same death, in sin and corrupted nature, conveyed to all their posterity.

ARMINIUS.

God hath not decreed to leave the far greater part of mankind in the fall of Adam, and exclude them from all hope of salvation, without any intervention of actual sin.

CALVIN.

They, who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ; neither are any other redeemed, but the elect only.

The rest God was pleased to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath.

ARMINIUS.

God hath decreed, that Christ should be an atonement for the sins of the whole world; and, by no means, to give Christ for a Mediator to the elect only.

None are excluded from eternal life by any absolute decree, which God passed beforehand, without respect to their unbelief or disobedience.

The peremptory and final election of particular persons, is made with respect to faith in Jesus Christ, and

their perseverance therein, as a condition required in those who are elected.

All the children of believers are sanctified in Christ, insomuch that none of them, dying before they come to the use of their understanding, are lost.

CALVIN.

God hath two wills: the one outward and revealed, whereby he most tenderly invites sinners to his grace, and most graciously calls them to repentance; *seeming* as though he were earnestly desirous of their salvation: whereas, his other will is inward and secret, which is irresistible, and takes effect infallibly; and by this he brings men, through ways unavoidable, to an estate and course of sin here, and then to eternal damnation and punishment hereafter.

ARMINIUS.

All those whom God calls to salvation, he calls in earnest; nor do we admit of what some call a *holy dissimulation, and twofold countenance of God*.

Utrum horum mavis, accipe Lector.

Reader, make your choice.

ERASMUS.

The Westminster Assembly of Divines will be reviewed in the next Article.

ON THE EXERCISE OF REASON IN RELIGIOUS MATTERS.

"*Search the Scriptures.*"—JESUS CHRIST.

"*Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.*"—PAUL.

THERE is, apparently, something in the nature of man, which leads him to superstition, and cheats him as it were into a belief of impossibilities. This feeling, or disposition, or whatever it may be called, has operated in all ages of the world, in every country, under every system of religion, and under every form of Government. The dark, the mysterious, the incomprehensible, have always had charms for the great bulk of mankind; and imagination seems to be most highly gratified when reason is most perplexed, or completely overwhelmed; and when blind, and unreflecting credulity alone, is all

that is demanded. The reasonable and reflecting portion of society is small, when compared with the ignorant and unthinking; and, of course, superstition and bigotry still prevail; and though disarmed in a great measure of their destructive tendencies at the present day, yet it is wonderful and lamentable, how much they extend their influence, and how far they govern the opinions of the multitude. In former times, even under the Christian dispensation, they seem to have ruled the world with almost despotic sway; and, under their dark and gloomy dominion, deeds of the most wanton barbarity were perpetrated, by men who professed to be most powerfully influenced by the spirit of God; but whose conduct was the result, either of zeal without knowledge, superstitious weakness, or designing hypocrisy: and at the present day, in our own, "our native land," to what folly and absurdity—to what degradation and impiety, is this spirit leading and driving many of our fellow-men—demanding from them a total prostration of understanding; calling on them to renounce the authority of that reason with which God has endowed them, and to barter that "liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free;" and imposing a yoke on the human mind, grievous and hateful to every person, not insensible to the dignity of human nature, and to the claims and privileges of rational beings.

This great train of delusion in religious matters never could have existed, had the Scriptures been diligently searched, had *reason* been exercised in the perusal, had not weak or *designing* men contrived to substitute their own corrupt and corrupting inventions, for the pure and unadulterated doctrines of the Bible.

But even when the Scriptures are resorted to, as revealing the means of eternal life, there is, in many cases, a degree of timidity, fatal to the cause of truth, in our researches; or a want of mental energy, or a bending of the spirit before the public voice; or a disposition to be guided by early prejudices; or an "inward hope, a fond desire, a longing" after popularity, which destroys the good effects of reading the inspired volume, and prevents it from being so influential in forming the principles, and regulating the conduct of man, as might be expected.

We are afraid to venture out of the beaten track—afraid, or too indolent to think for ourselves; we fall in

with common opinions, and seldom take the trouble of examining their correctness ; we pay too much reverence to the dogmatical creeds of fallible men, and too little to the infallible oracles of Jehovah ; we conceive it safer to believe too much than too little ; and if we are persuaded that we have gathered the wheat, we care not with how much chaff and rubbish it is mingled and confounded. With religion, we know it is the opinion of many, that reason has, and ought to have, little or nothing to do ; and, indeed, those who hold this doctrine, act up to the very letter ; for their sentiments on the subject are often adopted in defiance of reason, *defended* without reason, and, without reason, *thrust* on the adoption of others. Far be it from us to set up human reason in *opposition* to Scripture, or to prefer the erring suggestions of the one, to the sacred declarations of the other ; but we do affirm, if we are not permitted to use the understanding which God has given us, in considering the truths of the Bible, that the drivelling idiot and the roving maniac have as high pretensions to spiritual wisdom, and as fair claims to that knowledge, which maketh wise to salvation, as the most learned and pious philosopher or divine.

“Need I descend,” says one of the most enlightened and eloquent preachers of the present day, “need I descend to particulars, to prove that the Scriptures *demand* the exercise of reason ? Take, for example, the style in which they generally speak of God, and observe how habitually they apply to him human passions and organs. Recollect the declarations of Christ, that he came not to send peace, but a sword ; that unless we eat his flesh, and drink his blood, we have no life in us ; that we must hate father and mother, and pluck out the right eye ; and a vast number of passages equally bold and unlimited. Recollect the unqualified manner in which it is said of Christians, that they possess all things, know all things, and can do all things. I might extend the enumeration indefinitely, and who does not see that we must limit all these passages by the known attributes of God, of Jesus Christ, and of human nature ; and by the circumstances under which they were written, so as to give the language a quite different import from what it would require, had it been applied to different beings, or used in different connexions.” “We profess not to know a book which demands a more frequent exercise of reason than the

Bible. Its language is singularly glowing, bold, and figurative; demanding more frequent departures from the literal sense than that of our own age and country, and consequently demanding more continual exercise of judgment. With these views of the Bible, we feel it our bounden duty to exercise our *reason* upon it perpetually; to compare, to infer, to look beyond the letter to the spirit; to seek in the nature of the subject, and the aim of the writer, the true meaning; and, in general, to make use of what is known for explaining what is difficult, and for discovering new truths.* In these sentiments we perfectly concur, and would ask, what but the exercise of our reasoning powers could lead us at all to receive the Scriptures as the word of God? What but this could make us receive the doctrines therein contained, as the sure guides to happiness? What, but this, aided and purified by revelation, could enable us to form proper and becoming ideas of that Being we profess to worship, of his nature and attributes, of the gratitude we owe him, of the conditions of our happiness, and of the plan of redemption executed by Jesus Christ; together with all the lofty hopes, important discoveries, and glorious prospects of the gospel?—These are articles of Christian faith, and faith is *excited*, and *strengthened*, and *confirmed*, by the proper exercise of the intellectual powers with which our Creator has endowed us, and without which, we might be disposed to fling from us the Book of Inspiration, as made up of “cunningly devised fables,” or to believe it without knowing why; without being able to ascertain on what our belief depends; and without being prepared to give “a *reason* to him that asketh, for the hope that is in us.” It is the practice of many Ministers at the present day to attempt, at least, to hold up to public odium those teachers of Christianity, who think that the Scriptures should not be *indiscriminately* submitted to the perusal of the people; and who assert that their meaning, in many cases, should be taken from *their* lips without objection and without enquiry. Now what is the difference betwixt withholding certain portions of the Bible from the eyes of the laity, and saying to them, “you may read the Scriptures as much and as freely as you please, but

* Channing.

you must adopt my interpretation, or submit to be considered an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, and an outcast from the favour of God?" What is the difference betwixt those preachers who candidly say to their hearers "there are some portions of Sacred writ which you cannot understand, of which you must not presume to judge, and the meaning of which you must implicitly receive from us," and those, who, whilst they *talk* of the privilege of free inquiry, and *prate* about the right of private judgment, yet assume the tone of infallibility, and insist, not only, that the congregations under their own care, but also that their brethren in the ministry, as wise, as pious, and as learned, at least, as they can pretend to be, shall bow to their dictation, and yield, with the most profound deference, to their oracular decisions? Preachers, who, professing to be Presbyterians, would yet lord it over God's heritage; and grasping at mastery in the Church of Christ, would trammel the exertions of the human mind, and issue the mandate "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther."

It is highly probable we shall resume the subject; and, in the mean time, it is our decided opinion, that Scripture is perfectly agreeable to the rules of *right reason*—that it teaches a *reasonable* service—that its inspired pages do not refuse, but invite the exercise of our faculties, in all their purity, and with all their acuteness, as improved by study and reflection, to peruse and examine; and, if *thus* examined, a system of religion, pure and undefiled, "*full of good fruit, without partiality, and without hypocrisy,*" will be the result. Let us therefore choose to us judgment, let us know among ourselves what is good.—JOB, xxxiv. 4. L

We have received the two succeeding Articles from a respected Correspondent, who claims their insertion, both as a matter of courtesy and justice. He calls himself "one of a much calumniated party," and wishes his "sentiments to be known to the world by a truer medium than the misrepresentations of his opponents." We think this fair; and, as he has given the very words of the Calvinists, we conceive *they* have a right to be obliged to him for bringing their opinions so prominently before the public. Let it be understood, however, that we do not identify ourselves with *all* parts of either of the creeds.

EDITORS.

THE ESSENCE OF SYNODICAL ORTHODOXY;

Or, Extracts from Calvinistic Creeds.

I BELIEVE, that, “In the unity of the Godhead, there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity : God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding ; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father ; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son. There are three Persons in the Godhead ; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost ; and these three are One God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.” — *Westminster Confession of Faith.*

I believe, that, “By the Decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed ; and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished. Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen, in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions or causes moving him thereunto ; and all to the praise of his glorious grace. The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or with-holdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath, for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice.” — *Westminster Confession of Faith.*

I believe, that, “It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create, or make of nothing, the world and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good. Our first Parents being seduced by the subtlety and temptation of Satan, sinned in eat-

ing the forbidden fruit; which sin, God was pleased, according to his wise and holy counsel to permit, having purposed to order it to his own glory. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death, in sin and corrupted nature, conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions. Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the Law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries, spiritual, temporal, and eternal.”—*Westminster Confession of Faith.*

“Infants, themselves, while they bring with them their own damnation from their mother’s womb, are bound, not by another’s, but by their own fault: for, though they have not yet brought forth the fruits of their own iniquity, yet they have the seeds thereof inclosed within them; yea, their whole nature is a certain seed of sin; therefore, it cannot but be hateful and abominable to God.”—*John Calvin.*

I believe that “God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect; and Christ did, in the fulness of time, die for their sins, and rise again for their justification. Others, not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the Word, and may have some common operations of the Spirit, yet they never truly come unto Christ, and, therefore, cannot be saved; much less can men, not professing the Christian religion, be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they ever so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the law of that religion they do profess; and to assert and maintain that they may, is very pernicious, and to be detested. The burthen of damnation from which we were delivered, was laid on Christ. Faith, receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification. They, whom God hath accepted in his Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein unto the end, and be eternally saved.”—*Westminster Confession of Faith.*

“ Their own sins, under the direction of God’s providence, are so far from injuring the saints, that they rather promote their salvation.”—*John Calvin*.

I believe, that “ Works done by unregenerate men, though for the matter of them they may be things which God commands, and of good use both to themselves and others, yet as they proceed not from an heart purified by faith, nor are done in a right manner, according to the word, nor to a right end, the glory of God ; they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a man meet to receive grace from God ; and yet the neglect of them is more sinful and displeasing unto God !” — *W. C. of Faith*.

[The preceding summary of Calvinism will show to the Presbyterians of Ulster, the extraordinary doctrines which their Ministers are henceforth *bound* to preach to them, under the mysterious and imposing name of *Orthodoxy*. We are convinced, that the people only require to know what Synodical Orthodoxy really means, in order to perceive how repugnant it is to the word of God, to the enlightened reason of man, and to the best feelings of our nature.—
EDITORS.]

THE CREED OF AN ARIAN.

I BELIEVE, that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament contain a full, perfect, and explicit revelation of God’s holy will ; that they are the only infallible standard of faith and duty ; and that they are eminently calculated to promote the dearest interests of men, as rational, social, and accountable beings. These Divine Records unite with the voice of reason and of nature, in proclaiming the *great truth*, which forms the foundation of all religion—that *there is but ONE ETERNAL GOD, infinite in power, wisdom, goodness, holiness, justice, mercy, and all other possible perfections*. Upon this immovable basis, I rest my faith, and my hope. A departure from this great principle led to all the superstition and idolatry of ancient times, which were so offensive to the Divine Being ; and all the corruptions which have tarnished the lustre of Christianity, are connected with mistakes upon the same important subject. I cling, therefore, to the *unrivalled supremacy of THE FATHER*, with a fidelity which cannot be shaken. To say, that he has a *partner* on his throne, or an *equal* in his administration, would

be, in effect, to deny that he is **ALMIGHTY**, to assert that there are more Gods than **ONE**, and to remove that entire and devout reliance which the soul experiences, in the cheering contemplation of his incontrollable power, unerring wisdom, and inexhaustible goodness. I heartily rejoice, therefore, in believing, that the **UNITY** or **ONENESS** of God is not only the most *important*, but also the *plainest* principle of Religion. On some minor points the evidence may not be so ample; but this sublime truth shines forth in the order and harmony of the universe, and appears with infinite splendour and beauty, as the sun and centre, illuminating and holding together the entire glorious system of Revelation. It runs through every page of the blessed volume, like a line of light; so that quoting all the passages which prove it, would be a superfluous and almost an endless task. To show, however, that my faith stands, not on the wisdom of man, but on the testimony of Heaven, I shall cite a few verses for edification:—

EX. xx. 3.—Thou shalt have *no other* Gods before me.—(Deut. v. 7.)

DEUT. iv. 35.—Unto thee it was showed that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God: there is *none else* besides him.

DEUT. vi. 4.—Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is *one* Lord.—(See Mar. xii. 29.)

DEUT. xxxii. 39.—See now that I, even I, am he, and there is *no God* with me.

ISAIAH xlv. 5.—I am the Lord, and there is *none else*, there is *no God* beside me.

MATT. xix. 17.—And he said unto him: Why callest thou me good? there is none good but *one*, that is, God.

JOHN, xvii. 3.—And this is life eternal, to know thee the *only true God*, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.

Lest any mistake should arise, with respect to the meaning which I attach to these portions of Scripture, let it be distinctly understood, that, in the literal and ordinary sense of the words, I believe in *One God*, as *one being, one person*. I dare not presume to speak, like my Calvinistic brethren, with what appears to me an irreverent familiarity, of the Divine “Essence or Substance;” to use the unscriptural term “Trinity;” or to say that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are *one Being*, in direct opposition to the proper use of language, and to the express declarations of God’s Holy Word, which represent them as Three distinct and glo-

rious Persons, graciously engaged in promoting human salvation, under the separate characters of God, and Mediator, and Sanctifier. The God of the universe, and of the Bible, whom I devoutly worship, is the same gracious Being who is emphatically called by the Apostle, “the *God and Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ.” In his glorious character there is a harmonious union of all the attributes which constitute perfection—rendering him an object of equal veneration and love; by whose constant presence we are cheered, and by whose ever-watchful and unfailing Providence we are supplied with every blessing.

Whilst I devoutly believe, on the sure warrant of Scripture, that “there is *one God*,” I equally believe, on the same divine authority, that “there is *one Mediator* between God and man.” This glorious Being, who is called the Saviour, and the Son of God, is repeatedly represented in Scripture as enjoying the most intimate union with the Father, “*before* the foundation of the world,” as existing “*before Abraham*,” as “coming down from Heaven,” and as “proceeding from the bosom of the Father.” Though I cannot agree with my Trinitarian brethren, that the *begotten Son* was his own *Eternal Father*, I can as little agree with that truly respectable portion of my Unitarian brethren, who maintain, that he was only a Prophet, exalted far above Moses, by the effusion of the Holy Spirit, “which was given unto him without measure.” On this subject, Revelation *alone* can be our guide: and, surely, nothing can be more unequivocal than the terms in which it speaks of the *pre-existent* dignity and glory of our blessed Saviour. He is represented as far above the Archangel; as “dwelling in the bosom of the Father;” as being “the image of the invisible God, and the first-born of every creature;” as “the beginning of the creation of God;” and as passing over angels, to take upon him “the seed of Araham.” To all this, it may be added, that the Father, by him, “created all things, visible and invisible;” that he “became flesh, and dwelt amongst us;” that, “without him, nothing was made, that was made;” and, finally, that he was the glorious Being “whom the Father *appointed* heir of all things, and by whom also he made the worlds.” But, whilst these, and multitudes of other portions of Holy Writ, fully testify the pre-existent glory of our

Divine Master, and animate our souls with gratitude for his amazing condescension in coming "to seek and to save sinners," the Sacred Records are equally ample and explicit, on the subject of his subordination to the Father. This great doctrine, which equally vindicates the *unity* and *supremacy* of God, runs through the whole of the New Testament, from Matthew to Revelation. It is the constant theme of our blessed Lord himself. When he taught the most sublime truths, he always referred to *God, as their Author*. "As my Father *taught* me, I speak: he gave me *commandment* what I should speak: the words that I speak, I speak not of *myself*." In the same humble and reverential spirit, he ascribes his miracles and works to *the power of God*: "The works that the Father *hath given* me, bear witness of me: I must work the work of him that *sent* me: the works that I do in my *Father's name*: all power is *given* unto me of my Father," On some points, however, he had not received instruction and power from the Father. When questioned respecting the destruction of Jerusalem, or the Day of Judgment, he replies; "Of that day and that hour, knoweth no man, no, not the angels in Heaven, neither the *Son*, but the *Father only*:" and again, "to sit on my right hand and on my left, it is not *mine* to give, but it shall be given unto them for whom it is prepared by my Father." Upon another occasion he says: "I came, not to do *mine own will*, but the Father's that *sent me*." Nothing can be more devout and humble than his supplications, "Our Father, which art in Heaven: Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as *I* will, but as *thou wilt*;" and, when about to leave his disciples, he says: "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, unto MY GOD and your God!"

The Apostolic Writings are filled with texts maintaining, in the clearest terms, the unrivalled supremacy of the Father, and the glorious office of the Mediator: "Him, hath God *exalted* with his right hand to be a prince and a saviour: Ye are Christ's, and *Christ is God's*: To us, there is but ONE GOD, the Father, and ONE LORD, Jesus Christ: The head of every man is Christ, and the *Head of Christ is God*: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: And, when all things shall be subued unto Him, then shall the *Son* also be SUBJECT unto Him that put all things under him, that

GOD *may be all in all*—now, a mediator is not a mediator of One, but God is ONE!" Many hundreds of texts, of similar import with the preceding, might be introduced; but farther evidence cannot be required by those who pray to God *through* the Saviour; who look upon him, not as the offended *Father* sitting on the Throne, but as the interceding *Mediator* at the *right hand* of God; who, with the eye of faith, see him, like Stephen, standing at the *right hand* of the Father; or who, in the Book of Revelation, behold the *Lamb* standing *before* the Father's throne, in the *midst* of the four and twenty elders, and saying, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are all thy ways, thou King of Saints!"

Unless, therefore, I cast off the authority of Scripture, renounce the use of my understanding, and reject the plainest expressions of language, I cannot avoid believing what I do believe, "That the Lord Jesus Christ existed in transcendant glory and intimate union with the Father, before the foundation of the world; that he came *from* the Father, to our earth, as a Divine Messenger of Grace and Truth; that, after submitting to a painful and ignominious death, he rose again, and ascended into Heaven, "where he ever sitteth at the right hand of God, making intercession for us," and second only to *Him who is all in all*; and finally, that, in the fulness of the time, "he shall come in the glory of his Father, with all his holy angels, to judge the world in righteousness."

I believe that the object of his mission was most merciful and beneficent; being directed to promote the best interests of men, temporal and eternal. To accomplish this gracious design, he communicated the most sublime and interesting views of the Divine Character, unfolded the grounds and sanctions of duty, struck at the root of evil in the human heart, enforced all his precepts by the irresistible argument of his sinless life, taught the blessed doctrine of repentance, "brought life and immortality clearly to light," and finally submitted to an ignominious death upon the cross, in fulfilment of prophecy, in confirmation of his divine sincerity, and in obedience to the will of his FATHER. The Death of our Blessed Lord, evidently forms the grand feature in the Christian Dispensation. It is the frequent theme of an-

cient Prophecy, the ever-recurring subject of Apostolic reference and gratitude, and occupies the songs of Angels in the Book of Revelation. In fact, it seems to be the *key-stone* of the arch of Christianity, without which the entire system would lose its stability and beauty. On this point, indeed, all sects are agreed; but with regard to its influence upon the salvation of sinners, various opinions have long existed. I do not believe with the Calvinist, in the doctrine of *vicarious atonement*—or, in other words, that the sins of men were *imputed* or *transferred* to Christ, who suffered in their room and stead, to render God *placable*, and “to satisfy Divine Justice.” I do not believe this, because *guilt is personal, and cannot be transferred*. Punishment might be inflicted upon the *innocent* instead of the *guilty*; but this would not remove the stain of moral turpitude from the offender; and instead of *satisfying justice*, it would, in itself, be essentially *unjust*. Were a human tribunal to permit *convicted criminals* to escape the penalties justly due to their offences, and to punish *innocent* and *virtuous men* in their room, would not the whole world exclaim against such a violation of the plainest principles of equity? Yet such is the charge imputed to the Deity, in Calvinistic creeds! I do not, therefore, believe in their doctrine of “Satisfaction,” because it impeaches the *Justice* of God: and I farther reject it, because it robs him of his *Mercy* and *Free Grace*. If *justice* be *satisfied*, *mercy* has no act to perform: and, if the *debt* be *paid*, the gift of pardon *cannot be free*! Besides, to allege that God is not *placable*, is to deny the most adorable perfections of his nature, to say that he is not “*Love*,” and to deprive him of the praise and glory to which he is justly entitled, as the beneficent Author of the all-merciful plan of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. I also reject this doctrine, because it necessarily encourages men to commit sin, under the idea of impunity, through the transfer of their guilt. In these views I am supported by the express declarations of Holy Writ: “He that *justifieth the wicked*, and he that *condemneth the just*—even they both are an abomination to the Lord.” “The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon *him*, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon *him*.” “As I live, saith the Lord, I will by no means *clear the guilty*.” “Every man shall bear his *own* burthen.” I will judge

you every man according to *his* (own) works." To these clear declarations of Scripture, it is unnecessary to add the words of fallible men; yet, in times like the present, when human authority has too much weight with many, I am not sorry to find my views confirmed by the testimony of Archbishop Magee, who says: "A strict vicarious *substitution*, or literal equivalent, is not contended for: no such notion belonging to the doctrine of atonement." He further declares: "That the death of Christ was never deemed, by any who did not wish to calumniate the doctrine of the atonement, to have *made God placable*; but merely viewed as the means through which to bestow forgiveness: the notion of infinite satisfaction being a calumny on our Church." Besides, the terms *imputed sin*, *imputed righteousness*, *vicarious punishment*, and *satisfaction*, are not to be found in Scripture.

In what way, then, it may be inquired, do I look upon the Sufferings and Death of the Redeemer as pre-eminently conducive to our salvation? I believe them to be so in *many* ways; and amongst others, in manifesting the love of God, "who spared not his only begotten Son, but made the Captain of our Salvation perfect through suffering"—in proving the divine benevolence and sincerity of our Blessed Lord—in drawing our *hearts* and our *souls* to him and his commandments, as our suffering Master—in the fulfilment of ancient prophecies—in establishing the Christian Dispensation, and in preparing the way for his resurrection, and showing the certainty, that we too, and all mankind, "shall be raised from the dead." I believe, that his death is eminently calculated for the preceding, and many other circumstances, to promote the *moral reformation* of man, and thereby to RECONCILE US unto God. In this true and literal sense of the word *atonement*, as implying *reconciliation* with an offended Father, through the death of his well-beloved Son, and our consequent *moral regeneration*, I most firmly believe the doctrine: and in these sentiments, I am convinced, that the most enlightened of those termed *Orthodox*, will cheerfully concur. I do not say, however, that there is not more, *much more*, in the death of our Saviour, than all that has been stated. I freely confess, that such views, important though they are, would seem too poor for the glowing and energetic language in

which that most interesting event is constantly mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures. In the counsels of the Divine mind, and in the economy of Salvation, the sufferings on Calvary may be accomplishing plans of infinite benevolence, which we, at present, are not permitted to scan: but of this, I am certain, that a knowledge of these plans is not *essential* to salvation, or they would have been *clearly revealed*; and I desire not “to be wise above what is written.” Upon another point, also, I am fully satisfied—that the death of Christ is not intended to interfere with our *moral responsibility*, to remove the penalty from ungodliness, to encourage presumptuous hopes, or to make us “continue in sin, because grace hath abounded.” On the contrary, I firmly believe, that the death of our Blessed Lord, will rise up against the persevering and impenitent offender, as an additional ground of his condemnation; for “in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision—but a new creature.” I believe, that the Lord Jesus Christ is an *ample and perfect Saviour*; fully adequate to the desires and wants of all who put their trust in him; “for, it hath pleased the FATHER, that in him should all FULNESS dwell”—inasmuch as “GOD hath *exalted* him to be a *Prince and a Saviour*; to give salvation to Israel, and the remission of sins.” I joyfully, therefore, accept of him, “as the way, and the truth, and the life,” through whom alone, as a Christian, I “can come unto the Father.”

I believe, that our first parents offended God by sin; and that, as descended from them, we inherit a frail and corruptible nature: but, I utterly reject the Calvinistic doctrine of *Imputed Guilt*, as contrary to reason and Scripture; and as derogatory to the justice and paternal character of God. We may be involved in the *consequences* of Adam's sin, without being involved in its *guilt*—just as the children of a profligate father may *suffer* from his *vices*, without being morally tainted with his *crimes*. *Misfortune* is transferable, but *guilt* is not. To constitute criminality, in the sight of any rational being, the offence must be the voluntary act of a *rational agent*. I repudiate, therefore, the Calvinistic doctrine of the Damnation of Infants, not elect, which all future Ministers of the Synod of Ulster *must* teach on pain of de-

privation, as equally abhorrent to the character of God, and the best feelings of humanity. A tree, or a stone, would be as much and as justly the object of punishment, as an infant, or an idiot. Even were my *head* convinced, I am persuaded my *heart* would not allow me to believe, that the happy infant, imbibing the gushing fountain of nature, and smiling in the face of its happier mother, is the object of "the wrath and curse" of the wisest and the best of Beings! But, blessed be God, there is no occasion, upon this subject, for a conflict between the understanding and the affections; for, the sure record of Scripture is benignantly emphatic and explicit. "As I live, saith the Lord, *the son shall not suffer for the iniquities of the father.*"—"Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for, of *such* is the kingdom of Heaven!"

I believe, that man is an *accountable being*, that he will hereafter "stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to answer for the deeds done in the body," and consequently, that he is a *free agent*, having *power* to choose the evil or the good. Upon no other principle, can *responsibility* be founded. If, as the Calvinists maintain, his entire will and actions be under the *irresistible control of an eternal and unchangeable decree*, he is no more an object of just praise for virtue, or of just condemnation for vice, than the inanimate clod of earth upon which he treads. Agreeably to this doctrine, "the benevolent Howard" and the infamous murderer, should be equally objects of our commendation. How thorough-paced Calvinists can, in conformity with their own system, condemn a man for any crime, I am unable to comprehend. Yet, generally, no men are more equitable; fully proving, that their natural sense of justice, is too strong for the conventional errors of their creed. "Choose ye this day, whom ye will serve," said the servant of God to the Children of Israel; had a man of Synodical Orthodoxy been present, he would have told him—"in vain you exhort them, for, they *cannot choose.*"

I believe, as God is the Father of *all* men, and "would have *all* to be saved," and invites *all* to accept of salvation, that the Calvinistic doctrine of Predestination, or Election, is derogatory both to his Grace and to his Truth! If, according to the present Creed of the Synod of Ulster, "some men and angels be predestinated, by

the Decree of God, to everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death, and if their number be so *certain* and *definite*, that it cannot be either *increased* or *diminished*;" and if this be, "without any foresight of faith or good works, or any other thing in the creature" ---if all this be true, faith is useless, virtue is but a name, the commandments of God are an idle mockery, and the very coming of the Saviour could be of no avail! I shall not dwell upon the nature and consequences of so astounding a doctrine; but express my joyful belief, that as our blessed Lord *invites* "all to come unto him, who are weary and heavy laden," all have the *power* to come if they *will*, and to receive "rest unto their souls." If we be finally excluded from the kingdom, we may rest assured, that our exclusion will not be the result of an "eternal decree," but of our own obstinacy and folly. "I have no pleasure," saith the Lord, "in the death of the ungodly; but rather, that he should turn from the evil of his ways and live."

I believe, with the Apostle James, that "faith without works is dead, being alone;" yet I as firmly believe with the Apostle Paul, that, "by the works of the Law (alone) no flesh shall be justified." Faith and works must go together, as *cause and effect*: they cannot, in the Christian, be separated, without rendering both unavailing. Yet, as all have sinned, and come short of their duty--as no mode of belief can produce absolute holiness--we can never rely, for *final acceptance*, either upon our faith or our works, or upon both united; but simply and entirely, upon the unbounded grace and mercy of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I do not believe with the Calvinist, in "the utter damnation of the Heathen world." The justice, the mercy, and the Word of God, rise up against this awful doctrine. Equity demands, that they should be judged according to their knowledge and opportunities; and by that "natural law which God hath given them." Neither do I believe, that salvation will be confined to the members of any Christian Church, or the professors of any peculiar Creed. I firmly believe, that many, of all creeds and all churches, "shall be brought to see the Salvation of the Lord." The Divine Being is not the God of a sect or a party, but the Father and the Friend of *all*: the Lord Jesus is not the Redeemer of a *few*,

but "the Saviour of *all men*," who will accept of his love. "Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be saved." "*Many* shall come from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." I do not say, that all theological systems are *equally* conducive either to the temporal or eternal interests of mankind; for, I am persuaded, that they are not: but I do believe, that even the most erroneous creed will not shut out a good and sincere man, from an humble mansion in the Father's house! In these views, I may be far wrong; but, I am certain, I feel more pleasure in believing, that even my opponents and enemies may be saved, than *they* have, in believing that I shall be damned. May the Spirit of Grace purify our faith, enliven our hope, and enlarge our charity!

The foregoing is a feeble, but faithful sketch, of the Religious Belief of one, holding the doctrines usually denominated Arian. It is the Creed of *one man*, written very hastily, without the advice, or assistance, or correction of any other human being. He does not know, that in the world, any other man holds the same sentiments; but of this he can assure the public, that his Creed is one of the *very worst of the "modern heresies."* Perhaps some, who have been taught by clamour and misrepresentation to look upon Arianism with *horror*, may find it *very like their own*; and fully as much resembling the truth of the Bible, as even Calvinism itself.

AN ARIAN.

CALUMNIES AGAINST THE CHURCH OF GENEVA.

In a published report of the speeches and proceedings of the Synod of Ulster, at their last meeting, held in Cookstown, in August, 1829, one of the Ministers, the Rev. John Brown, is represented as having alluded to the Pastors and people of the city of Geneva in the following terms, viz:—

"At Geneva they declaimed about the right of private judgment, and against creeds. Their numbers increased; they got into the pulpit, and polluted it; and finally enacted a decree, that none of the Orthodox doctrines

should be taught in their Churches. One man had read the Bible and judged for himself; and when he ventured to teach the Gospel, the cry from the Arian and Semi-infidel multitude was, '*Down with Jesus Christ.*'"

The recital contained in this passage of Mr. Brown's speech, cannot be read by any serious person without a thrill of horror and disgust. It ascribes to a Christian community a degree of blasphemous atrocity, scarcely exceeded by the frantic mob of Paris, during the worst period of the French Revolution. It is in every respect so glaringly absurd, that nothing but the weakest credulity could for one moment admit it to be true.

It is well known to the religious world that the Church of Geneva, so long distinguished as the scene of Calvin's personal labours, took a prominent part in effecting the work of the Reformation. It is, also, well known that she has been among the foremost in carrying forward the true principles of that Reformation to their just and legitimate result, by recognising and acting upon the all-important truth that **THE BIBLE ALONE IS THE RELIGION OF CHRISTIANS**. More than a century ago, she set a noble example to Christendom, by renouncing all human authority in matters of faith; substituting the Holy Scriptures as the sole unerring standard of religious practice and belief, in place of the creeds and confessions invented and imposed by the daring arrogance of uninspired mortals.

A church so purified was not unlikely to be assailed in seasons of theological contention. Considering the evil passions usually engendered by such strife, it might be expected that her generous indication of religious liberty should provoke the spleen of those who are content under the yoke of spiritual thralldom; and that her rejection of human formulas of belief should be regarded with a malignant eye by those who maintain contradictory creeds in opposition to the light of revelation, or who prefer inexplicable confessions of faith to the unembarrassed doctrines of the word of God. Accordingly, the Church of Geneva, like other communities which maintain the same principles of genuine Christian freedom, has been exposed in various ways to the attacks of calumny, misrepresentation and abuse. The Calvinists of the British islands, in particular, appear to have been much mortified by the

reflection, that the very church in which Calvin was himself a Pastor—that the very College in which he, the founder of their faith, was a Professor—have had the courage to question the infallibility of this distinguished teacher—to examine his doctrines by Scripture, the sure test of truth—to renounce whatever tenet they found inconsistent with the word of God—and, in fact, to forsake Calvin in order to follow Christ. They feel that the conduct of Geneva is a severe, though silent, reproach on their own prejudices and illiberality. Under the influence of that persecuting and unchristian spirit which seems to be essentially connected with their gloomy and unscriptural system, and which the author of that system displayed when he brought the meek and amiable Servetus to the stake, they have assailed the pastors and the people of Geneva with unsparing hostility. They have not only maligned her character abroad, but they have endeavoured to foment religious discord within her religious habitations; and to this unhallowed purpose they have devoted much personal exertion and much expenditure of money.

Roused by these repeated and unprovoked attacks, the Church and Government of Geneva considered it a duty to themselves to expose the injustice of the aggressors, and to publish to the world a true statement of the condition of their religious affairs. This document (of which an English translation was published in London in 1824,) is authenticated by copious extracts from public records; and all the virulence of Calvinism has not been able to convict it of a single instance of incorrectness. It was drawn up by the venerable M. Chenevière, one of the pastors of Geneva, and Rector of the College, in which he holds also the dignified and responsible office of Professor of Theology. The work contains an ample refutation of the various calumnies invented against Geneva, and an unanswerable vindication of the religious principles of her Synod and people.

It must be presumed in Christian charity, that Mr. Brown was totally unacquainted with this work of M. Chenevière, when he delivered his speech to the Synod of Ulster. That his auditors were equally ignorant, may, also, be inferred from their silence on the occasion,—not one of them having the candour or generosity to express

even a doubt relative to the astounding and* incredible tale of impiety narrated in their presence.

When Mr. Brown's speech appeared in the newspapers, it would have received an immediate contradiction from some persons in Ireland, who are well acquainted with the piety, Christian zeal, and unblameable conversation of the Clergy of Geneva. But as the evil report was of such magnitude, so grossly injurious to the good name of an entire Christian community, uttered, too, by a Minister of the Gospel in the highest Court of his Church, and, to all appearance, believed by the whole assembly, it demanded a more formal and especial refutation. Accordingly, the newspaper containing Mr. Brown's speech, was transmitted by me, acting officially under the direction of my Brethren in Dublin, to the Synod of Pastors at Geneva, with a letter, requesting their observations on the allegations contained therein. To this communication I received an official reply from M. Chenevière, from which the following is an extract: "J'ai traduit la partie de votre lettre qui concernait le clergé de Genève: J'ai envoyé ma traduction à la compagnie des Pasteurs. Ces Messieurs m'ont chargé de vous dire, que le fait continu dans l'inculpation de Rev. John Brown est *absolument faux*. Jamais on n'a crié chez nous. "A bas Jesus Christ;" et il est *absolument faux* qu'on gêne les pasteurs, et qu'on les empêche d'enseigner directement les doctrines orthodoxes s'ils les croient. Seulement, ceux qui les annoncent, (et il y en a plusieurs,) sont tenus de ne pas le faire polémiquement."

"I translated that part of your letter, which related to the Clergy of Geneva, and I sent my translation to the Synod of Ministers. These gentlemen have directed me to assure you, that the circumstance, contained in the injurious charge of the Rev. John Brown, is *absolutely false*. No person in this city has ever uttered the cry, 'Down with Jesus Christ.' And it is *absolutely false* that preachers are restricted or prevented from teaching directly orthodox doctrines, if they believe them: only those who preach them (of whom there are several), are prohibited from doing so in a polemical manner."

* The story might not appear incredible to some who are conscious that it could be paralleled.—*Editor*.

The investigation of this affair will, I trust, have the effect not only of disabusing the public mind with respect to the Church of Geneva, but of creating greater caution in the admission of evil reports. One of the most mischievous effects, accruing to society from theological animosities, is the prevalent disposition to "say all manner of evil falsely" against opponents in speculative opinions. As a good cause requires not the aid of falsehood and slander for its support, it will not dishonour itself by the use of such unholy weapons. Those who employ them to serve a momentary purpose, may gain by them a momentary triumph; but the result must issue in their sure detection and lasting disgrace. Even when an injurious report is founded on fact, it is a breach of that "charity which thinketh no evil" to give it too hasty credence, or to spread it abroad without due investigation of its truth. This is a great offence with which, perhaps, all parties are chargeable, in the present state of violent excitement: but the offence assumes a complexion of a much deeper dye, when the evil report is found to be altogether destitute of truth, and manifestly fabricated for the very purpose of defamation.

JAMES ARMSTRONG.

Dublin, January 15, 1830.

SCRIPTURE ITS OWN INTERPRETER.

SIR,—It is my intention to transmit to you, for each number of **THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN**, a list of passages of Scripture, arranged under different heads, with the view of showing how the doctrines expressed in these texts pervade the Sacred Volume from beginning to end. I shall content myself with bringing forward what is sufficient to establish this grand principle, without aiming at a complete collection. At the end of the list from the Old Testament, I have inserted the observations of our great poet, Milton, on closing a similar series in his newly discovered work "*On the Christian Doctrine*;" and I shall occasionally introduce such remarks, original or selected, as I may think to be interesting and useful.

ON THE PERSONAL UNITY OF GOD.

Exod. iii. 14, 15.—And God said unto Moses, **I AM THAT I AM**: and he said, Thus shalt thou say to the Children of Israel, **I AM** hath sent me unto you. And God said, moreover, unto Moses, Thus

shalt thou say to the Children of Israel, The Lord God of your Fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob hath sent me unto you : this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.

(Compare this with Matt. xxii. 31, 32. from which it is clear that our Saviour does not mean himself to be the God so described.)

Ex. xx. 3.—Thou shalt have *no other* Gods before me.—(Deut. v. 7.)

DEUT. iv. 35.—Unto thee it was showed that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God : there is *none else* besides him.

DEUT. iv. 39.—Know, therefore, this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above and upon the earth beneath ; there is none else.

DEUT. vi. 4.—Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.—(See Mar. xii. 29.)

DEUT. xxxii. 39.—See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no God with me.

2 SAM. vii. 22.—Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God ; for there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

2 KINGS xix. 19.—Now, therefore, O Lord our God, I beseech save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even THOU ONLY. See ver. 15.

NEH. ix. 6.—Thou, even thou art LORD ALONE.

PSALM., lxxxiii. 18.—That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the Earth.

PSALMS, lxxxai. 40.—For thou art great and doest wondrous things ; thou art GOD ALONE.

ISAIAH, xxxvii. 16.—O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the Cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the Earth.

ISAIAH xxxvii. 20.—Now, therefore, O Lord, our God, save us from his hand, that all the Kingdoms of the Earth may know that thou art the Lord, EVEN THOU ONLY.—xl. 25.—xli. 4—xlii. 8.

ISAIAH xlv. 6.—Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts, I am the first and I am the last, and beside me there is no God.—(See also verse 8.)

ISAIAH xlv. 5.—I am the Lord and there is none else, there is no God beside me.

ISAIAH xlv. 6.—I am the Lord, and there is none else.—(See, also, verses 18, 21, 22, and chap. xliii. 10, 11, 14, 15.)

HOS. xiii. 4.—Yet I am the Lord, thy God, from the Land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no God but me.

JOEL, ii. 27.—And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God and none else.

“What plainer, more distinct expressions could be used ; or better adapted to the use of the common people and to their daily habits of speaking ; so that the people of God should understand, that God was one in number, one spirit, in the same manner as they understood any other thing, admitting of number, to be one. For it was

just and most agreeable to right reason, that the first and greatest commandment in which God willed that he should be worshipped by the whole people—even the meanest among them—should be so delivered as to have no ambiguity nor obscurity in it, so as to drive his worshippers into error, or to hold them in suspense from any doubt. And that people did thoroughly and at all times understand, both under the law and the prophets, that God was one in number that there was no other beside him, much less equal to him. For there had not yet sprung up those scholastics, who, trusting in their ingenuity, or rather in their paradoxes, in reality called in question the unity of the Deity, which they pretended to maintain.”...MILTON.

MATT. xix. 17.—And Jesus said unto him: Why callest thou me good? there is none good but *one*, that is, God.

MARK xii. 32....And the scribe said unto him, Well Master, thou hast said the truth, for there is one God, and there is none other but HE. [See ver. 34. where our Saviour commends this answer.]

JOHN xvii. 3.—And this is life eternal, to know thee, the only TRUE GOD, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.

ROM. xvi. 27....To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

1 COR. viii. 6....But to us there is but one God, the Father, &c.

GAL. iii. 20....Now a Mediator is not a Mediator of one, but God is One.

EPH. iv. 6....One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

1 TIM. i. 17....Now unto the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

1 TIM. ii. 5....For there is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus.

1 TIM. vi. 15....Which [appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ] in his times he shall show who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. See also ver. 16.

JAMES ii. 19....Thou believest that there is one God, thou doest well.

REV. xv. 3, 4....And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY; just and true are thy ways thou King of Saints, who shall not fear thee and glorify thy name, for THOU ONLY art holy.

I could add to these about 300 passages in which the sense restricts the meaning of the word God to the Father only, but I consider what is now given to be sufficient for the present. Many of the others will occur under different heads; and I shall have to direct the attention of your readers to them on a future occasion, when I shall offer some remarks, to show how forcibly, indeed, irrefragably, the sentiments conveyed in them are supported by the express declarations of God's word, and dictate the current language of the New Testament from Matthew to Revelation.

ERUNETES.

Intelligence.

WE have a great mass of intelligence on hands, but as it is quite impossible to allow room for it in detail, we trust our friends will excuse us for condensing, as much as possible, their valuable communications.

In the present state of the Presbyterian Church, it is natural for us to be deeply interested in the prosperity of Remonstrant Congregations, and we are happy to announce, that their ministers have, in every case, carried along with them, and still retain, all the respectability and good feeling of the people; and though neither art nor artifice is left untried; though quibbling and misrepresentation, and manœuvring of every kind are resorted to by their antagonists, yet integrity of principle, and unbending firmness in the cause of truth and Christian liberty, still maintain their ground, and we have no doubt whatever of their ultimate triumph.

GLENARM.

At Glenarm, the few and insignificant individuals who opposed the minister of that place (the Rev. Alex. Montgomery,) and most of whom had never been members of his congregation, were *solicited* to embrace the course which they adopted; and in consequence, a document was got up, purporting to be a "*Memorial from the Presbyterians of Glenarm*" forsooth, and presented to the Templepatrick Presbytery, praying to be supplied with *Orthodox* preachers. This memorial, however, turns out to be the production and manufacture of a certain mechanic, who, wisely considering that there were other ways and means of procuring subsistence, easier and more desirable than that of manual labour, commenced *Scripture reader*, under the sanction and patronage of an eminently pious society; and, labouring in his vocation, bent his footsteps to the neighbourhood of Glenarm, as a place that greatly needed the edifying exertions of his talents and piety. On this memorial, drawn up by this individual, and carried about from house to house for signatures, did the Templepatrick Presbytery act; and with a degree of modesty, *peculiar* to the *exclusively righteous*, they requested the use of Mr. Montgomery's Meeting-house;—for what purpose? Why, for the *laudable* purpose of in-

flaming the minds of the people against their minister, by holding him up as a heretic, and as one who, to use the hacknied slang of the party, "denies the Lord who bought him." The Meeting-house was of course refused: they then applied for the Manor Court-house, but the truly respectable Magistrate to whom the application was made, possesses too much good feeling to foment, or to countenance discord in society;—too much good sense to be duped by pretended zeal—and too much decision to submit to a Pharisaical faction—therefore replied, "that to grant the Court-house for the purpose stated, against the wish, as he was informed, of a large majority of Mr. Montgomery's congregation, would not, in his opinion, tend to preserve the peace and harmony of a district *hitherto remarkable* for the feeling of good will and kindness, which persons professing different creeds, and entertaining different opinions on the subject of religion, manifested towards each other." Accordingly he did not accede to their request; and we are happy to add that his conduct in this matter has been decidedly approved of by the highly respected lord of the soil; and that Mr. Montgomery continues to enjoy the esteem and affection, not only of all the respectable Presbyterians, but of every well disposed person in and about Glenarm.

TEMPLEPATRICK.

At Templepatrick, the feeling of unfeigned attachment to their Minister, and to the cause of the Remonstrants, prevails; and though the apostles of schism, dissension, and strife are busy—though the noble landlord and his complaisant agent, have taken them, in some measure, under their holy keeping—though the usual means of intimidation, insinuated calumnies, and direct mis-statements have been regularly practised—yet, his people have rallied round Mr. Campbell, and he and they stand firm and resolved. We shall give an example of the facility with which reproach can be conveyed, and a wound inflicted on the character *indirectly*, but with all the intended effect. In the 2d Number, and 62d page of "The Orthodox Presbyterian," it is recorded, that "Josiah Welsh (Minister of Templepatrick) died on Monday, June 23d, (1634) and was buried in Templepatrick, where his humble grave was *formerly* marked with a tombstone, with appropriate epitaphs in Latin and Eng-

lish verse. The stone being accidentally broken, as we are informed, is not now to be found."—"The writer," says Mr. Campbell, "should have made due inquiry. The stone is neither broken nor lost. He has offended against truth, and when *design* is conjoined with the offence, he merits rebuke. The idea he wishes to convey is, that my predecessors in the ministry, and their hearers, or that I, and mine, have inculcated and imbibed such baleful sentiments, as to lead us to cast aside all veneration for that great and good man, and to violate the sanctuary of the dead; that, so abominable are our principles, we hesitate not to enter the graveyard, and to purloin from the cemetery the only tablet which pious Christians engraved to commemorate departed worth. The thought never flitted across our imaginations. It could only find a home in the heart of the calumniator; and as the idea is base, the *fact* proves its *malignity*. The tomb and tombstone, of rude materials it is true, stand both entire as they were erected nearly 200 years ago; and the Session, at my instance, had the letters on the external surface of the stone lately retraced by a skilful workman, so that they are equally legible this day, as they were when first cut."

The above is a matter of little importance in itself, but when taken in connexion with the general conduct of the members of Synod to the Remonstrants, it shows how some Orthodox Presbyterians can stoop, to accomplish their designs.

CAIRNCASTLE AND BALLYCARRY.

In Cairncastle and Ballycarry, the Rev. Messrs. Alexander and Glendy are still at their posts, and supported by their people, notwithstanding the crusades which have been directed against them; but, in short, the respectability of all the Remonstrant Ministers—their ardent single-mindedness and detestation of hypocrisy—their firm, intrepid stand against the usurped authority which would "lord it over God's heritage"—their patient endurance of the evils which they are suffering for conscience' sake, together with the humble, unpretending tenor of their principles and piety, form as it were "a wall round about them—a hedge on every side, within which the peace of God takes up its abode; *the Spirit itself bearing witness with their Spirits, that they have held fast their righteousness, and have not removed their integrity*

from them." As we have already said, our limits prevent us from entering into details, we therefore hasten on to the spirit-stirring subject of

GREYABBEY.

We are chiefly indebted to the honest and independent exertions of *The Northern Whig* Newspaper, for the ample and correct details which we are enabled to give of this most interesting case. We gladly embrace this opportunity, also, of acknowledging the debt of gratitude which we feel, to that truly respectable Journal, in common with all the advocates of free inquiry, for its disinterested and efficient maintenance of the glorious principles of Civil and Religious Liberty.

In reporting the proceedings connected with this Congregation, we think we cannot do better than commence with some extracts from the statements that were made at a *pro re nata* meeting of the Remonstrant Presbytery of Bangor, held in Belfast, on the 13th February, 1830. It is so comprehensive, and it brings before the public eye so many *facts* interesting to every Presbyterian, that we shall trust to the candour and kindness of our readers, and proceed, even at the risk of being charged with repeating some occurrences recorded in our first number. After the minutes of a meeting of Presbytery, held at Greyabbey 12th January, had been read, Mr. Montgomery being called on, addressed the Moderator to the following effect :

Sir,—Whether we regard the time or the circumstances connected with our assembling this day, our meeting may be justly considered *extraordinary*. We have come together in the nineteenth century, upon an unusual day of the week, to consider the case of a Presbyterian Minister shut out of his Meeting-house, without notice and without crime, and committed, by order of a Protestant Landlord, to the custody of an armed Police, upon the Lord's day, whilst proceeding to enter the House of God for Divine Worship ! I shall not detain you, by a recital of the dissensions in the Synod of Ulster, for some years past, which, in their melancholy details and results, are but too well known to the public. I shall not speak of broken faith, and violated laws, and injurious enactments : but I must speak of the courteous *language* of our Brethren of the Synod, when they urged

us to leave them, on the plea, "that, although we could not amicably adjust our affairs in conjunction, we might be excellent friends, if separated." I do well remember the benignant declaration of the ascendant power—"We wish to curtail none of your rights and privileges; we wish for none of your loaves and fishes; we wish only to pursue our own plans in our own way, and to leave you at full liberty to do the same!" This gracious profession, of the insincerity of which we have since had so many and such striking proofs, was hailed by the assembled Synod with acclamation, as finding a responsive chord in every heart! We calculated, therefore, that if there was faith in man, or honour in a Christian Synod, we should see the halcyon days of religious peace and brotherly love restored, after our separation. The Committees of the Synod and the Remonstrants accordingly met in September last, and arranged the terms of "an amicable separation;" which, on the whole, were liberal, and generally satisfactory. By this arrangement, the Remonstrant Ministers and their successors were, with some slight provisos, secured in all the rights and interests enjoyed by members of the Synod.

So far, all was, generally speaking, fair, open, and Christian; but, no sooner had the Remonstrants been thus *singled out*, than a most violent and unprincipled crusade was commenced against them. Worthless emissaries and calumnious publications were sent into their congregations, to excite contention, by the foulest misrepresentations, and the most disgraceful arts. Of the five Remonstrant Ministers in the Presbytery of Templepatrick, *one* only has escaped persecution from his clerical Brethren. I need not detail the sufferings and the honourable triumphs of those exemplary Ministers, some of whom have been nearly forty years in the sacred office; for they are well known to the public. In the Presbytery of Bangor, we were more happy: we lived in peace, for upwards of three months, until the following "*Advice*" was published to the members of our congregations, by certain individuals calling themselves the conductors of a Monthly Periodical, issued in this town: "*No matter how small the number of the Orthodox, let them apply to a Presbytery for preaching. 'Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good will to give you the kingdom.' Luke xii. 32. Let them, under advice of*

Presbytery, claim the use of their Meeting-house for preaching. Let them consider themselves as the *original and endowed* congregation : and, by preserving their congregational form, continue to assert all their *congregational rights*." Is it possible that this "Christian Advice" was given by the *very man* who exclaimed, when a popular effect was to be produced,—“ We want none of your loaves and fishes.” By way of preparing the soil, however, for the good seed, some of the party, I know not who was the ingenious man, set afloat a story of an alleged immorality, against Mr. Watson, the Minister. Two Orthodox Ministers in the vicinity, having been a few years ago degraded for a similar offence, the allegation would have been calculated to obtain credence, had not the story been got up so badly, and under circumstances so improbable, as to baffle all belief. Some, however, *feigned* a belief in it ; and certain neighbouring Ministers thought this a favourable opportunity for exciting in the congregation an opposition to Mr. Watson and the Remonstrants. The usual arts were resorted to—*preaching* in his bounds, or on his borders—pamphlets, visitings, and clamour---yes ; and some wretches had the audacity to crawl into the presence of the landlord, in whose estate the Meeting-house stands, in order to poison his mind, and to secure for themselves and their contemptible party, the place of worship erected chiefly at the expense of their respectable brethren, or their ancestors.

Hearing of these disgraceful proceedings, the Remonstrant Presbytery of Bangor, due notice being given to the congregation, met at Greyabbey on the 12th of last month, explained their principles to the people at great length, and said they were free to remain with them, or to return to the Synod. With a remarkable ardour and enthusiasm, the crowded congregation, with only a *very* few dissentients, resolved to adhere to the Remonstrants.

Some members of the Synodical Presbytery of Bangor, who had gone to ascertain what prospects there were of detaching the people from their Pastor, retired with the few male-contents to the village tavern, and there employed themselves in organizing plans for creating disaffection. They appointed a meeting of *their body* to be held in Greyabbey, on the 27th of January, and

drew up a memorial to *themselves*, which was to be carried through the congregation for signature, expressive of a determination to abide with Orthodoxy and the Synod. To obtain signatures to this document, the most disgraceful arts were practised—members of other churches interfered—one name at least was forged—some houses were visited four times—the religious principles of the Remonstrants were grossly belied—names were obtained to papers *without any heading*—and, in one instance, a poor woman told me, with tears in her eyes, she had put her name to the paper, being informed it was in *favour* of Mr. Watson! The great engine, however, by which signatures were obtained, was the terror of the landlord's displeasure—no puny engine, when it is considered, that he is proprietor of perhaps *three-fourths* of the Parish, and that very many of his tenants hold their lands upon the single life of our illustrious Monarch—the prolongation of whose days we all so ardently desire. To what extent this system of cajolery, misrepresentation, and intimidation proceeded, I cannot pretend to say; but, at the meeting of the Synodical Presbytery, upon the 27th of January, 97 signatures were attached to the memorial. Hearing of these things, I preached in Greyabbey upon January 24th—called upon the people to maintain their integrity, and to ratify their resolution of adherence to the Remonstrants, passed upon the 12th, by actually affixing their signatures to it. The call was promptly answered; in the Meeting-house, before my own eyes, about 150 *bona fide* seatholders signed, and, in the course of two days, others came forward—making, in all, 260. Here, then, we have for the Remonstrants, 260 *unbiassed* votes; on the other side, only 97; many of whom are said not to be seatholders.

On the 27th of the same month, the Synodical Presbytery of Bangor met in the Inn, at Greyabbey: it was then inquired if they would not proceed to the Meeting-house? A member answered in the negative; as the keys of the house were in the hands of Mr Watson's Committee. They were informed, however, that the Meeting-house was open; for some individuals had actually forced the door, and taken possession of it during the night, or that morning. After one of the members of Presbytery had preached, others feared that they had

been acting illegally, and the Presbytery retired to the green; when it was resolved, that preaching should be supplied to such members of the congregation as were dissatisfied with the present Minister. On Saturday, the 30th of January, two policemen were stationed at the Meeting-house, guarding two notices which were posted on the walls or door. I shall take the liberty of reading these notices; in the first instance without comment, lest I should destroy the beautifully running flow of the language by any remarks of mine:---

“NOTICE.

“As the dissensions in the Presbyterian congregation of Greyabbey have amounted to an absolute schism, it has now become an imperative duty on me, both as magistrate and landlord, to interfere for the preservation of the peace, and, by exerting myself towards the restoration of harmony, to prevent the dissolution of the congregation. In furtherance of this, to me most desirable object, I have this day accepted the surrender of the Meeting-house, and now call on the contending parties to prepare and lay before me, with all convenient despatch, such written statements, whereby I may be enabled to decide who are the successors, in discipline and faith, of the congregation, to whose use the Meeting-house was originally appointed: as to such congregation I hold myself, in honour, bound to restore the use of the house. And, further, I purpose granting a lease to the Minister by them chosen, containing such covenants as, I trust, will prevent all similar dissensions. As, however, this decision must not be made hastily, or without serious deliberation, I cannot determine upon shutting up the house for so long a period; and have resolved, for the mean time, to permit some unobjectionable Minister to perform divine service therein, on the accustomed days. Were I to permit the appointment of the Rev. Mr. Watson to that duty, I should prejudice the case, and exclude a large number of individuals, who allege that Mr. Watson has seceded from the original faith, I have, therefore, acceded, with certain modifications to the request of the Presbytery of Bangor, and resolve as follows:— ‘The Ministers appointed by the Presbytery of Bangor have my permission to perform divine service in the Meeting-house of Greyabbey; under the proviso, that they shall abstain from all controversial points of doctrine, and in the full confidence that they will strenuously instil into the hearts of their hearers Christian charity and brotherly love. These are my injunctions; and I sincerely trust, that I may shortly see that once happy and contented parish again united in the bonds of peace.’

(Signed)

“WM. MONTGOMERY.

“Greyabbey, 30th January 1830.”

I say nothing respecting the legality of this notice. I dare say Mr. Montgomery was perfectly justifiable in the course which he took; and, as it was intended by

him to be made a public document, he can feel in no way offended with me, for noticing it publicly, and expressing my opinion respecting it. It appears, that a schism had taken place in the congregation of Greyabbey. Who caused that schism? Was it the people belonging to the congregation? No: it was caused by persons external to the congregation—persons who had no interest in its existence and prosperity, going about exciting alarm, by stating, falsely, as I hope, that it was the determination of Mr. Montgomery to deprive the people of their Meeting-house. I do not pretend to question his right of interference, as a Magistrate, to prevent schism. Such is the doctrine laid down in the Confession of Faith; and there can be little doubt that it was strongly brought before him. It is said, that the Meeting-house was surrendered to Mr. Montgomery. Who surrendered it? Did Mr. Watson surrender it? Did his congregation surrender it? No; it was never surrendered by them; they were never asked to surrender it. I have heard that an underling of his own sent the key of the padlock to him on Friday night; but I know that the person had no authority whatever from the congregation for doing so. Mr. Montgomery calls upon the people to come before him, that he may judge who are entitled, by their “discipline and faith,” to have the house restored to them. Why, such matters are only subjects of decision for ecclesiastical courts. But, he may be perfectly right and justifiable in assuming the privilege of deciding matters of faith. We cannot, however, look on with approbation, and feel no emotion, more than if it were the shadow of a summer cloud passing over the sky. Our feelings may be wrong; but we cannot suppress them. With respect to the covenant which has been made with those who are to have liberty to preach, the thing may be fair and salutary; but if landlords are to have the right of exercising such prerogative, the people have good reason to tremble for the consequences. It may be the right of a Magistrate, to degrade a Presbyterian Minister from the discharge of his duties; but if such a right exist, it is full time for every man in the empire, in whose bosom there exists a spark of Protestant independence, to petition the legislature against such tyrannical power. Mr. Montgomery says, in his notice, that he has “acceded to the request

of the Presbytery of Bangor." Now, what will be thought of this, when I tell you---and I rest my statement upon the authority of the Moderator of the Bangor Presbytery---*that no such request was ever made.* Do I charge Mr Montgomery with telling a falsehood? I do not. I am sure he is incapable of fixing up a falsehood before the world. But I tell you what I believe: he has been duped*---he has received false information. Who the liar is, that has written to him, or made the statement to him, I do not know. Time may, perhaps, lead to the discovery. A "proviso" is made by Mr. Montgomery, that the Ministers, whom he has permitted to preach in Mr. Watson's house, shall abstain from inculcating particular doctrinal opinions. These Presbyterian ministers are to preach what a member of another church pleases! These, let it be observed, are Orthodox ministers, and consider the prohibited doctrines to be the essentials of Christianity. Did they obey the injunction, and thus keep back what they believe to be the very vitals of pure religion? They are, moreover, to inculcate nothing but peace and love. A man is first to be deprived of his house---turned adrift upon the world---and then peace and brotherly kindness are to be preached! I shall not venture to characterize, as I have heard done, the next notice which I shall read to you:—

" NOTICE.

" The Rev. J. M. M'Cauley of Donaghadee, is to officiate in the Meeting-house of Greyabbey, on Sunday the 31st current, that is to say, to-morrow; he having obtained my approbation and permission so to do.

(Signed) "

" WM. MONTGOMERY.

" *Saturday, 30th January 1830.*"

Mr. Watson, however, proceeded next day, being the Sabbath, to his Meeting-house, as he had been accustomed to do, accompanied by a considerable number of his people. Instead of two policemen, as on the preceding day, he found no fewer than six, guarding the door of his house. He was appalled at this sight. He retired to consult with the members of his congregation; and they, being of opinion that it was unsafe to expose him-

* The sequel of this extraordinary business will show how fully this anticipation has been verified.—EDITORS.

self to an armed police, who were acting under the command of a Magistrate, advised him not to persist. He complied with their advice, and retired to his Session-house. This house is very small, and unable to contain the people who were assembled. He proceeded with the services of the day. Those of his flock, who were unable to find admittance into the house, crowded round the door; and, cold and inclement as it was, exposed their bare heads to the driving snow, whilst they were thus engaged in devoutly worshipping their God. Meantime, whilst this aged Minister and his people, driven from the place in which they had long bowed before their Creator, were, with what feelings I do not pretend to describe, supplicating the throne of divine mercy, a Minister passed by, entered through the armed Constabulary, occupied the pulpit of his distressed brother, and preached--the word of God!

On the 6th of February, Mr Watson noticed Mr Montgomery to restore his right to preach in his Meeting-house, which was refused. Next day, being Sunday, he proceeded to his house of worship. On his arrival, he perceived a party of seven police constables, planted to guard the house. He then turned to his Session-house, which he had been in the habit of entering for thirty years; and there the following notice, fixed up before him, met his eye:---

"CAUTION

"The Police are ordered to call upon all persons assembled in the neighbourhood of the Meeting-house, to disperse: and the people are hereby warned, that should they disobey such order, to disperse therefrom, proclamation, under the Riot Act shall immediately be made, whereby any person so assembled whatsoever, or even conducting themselves in the most peaceable and quiet manner, are rendered liable to all the pains and penalties that are enforced against rioters and disturbers of the peace.

"W.M. MONTGOMERY.

"Sunday, the 7th Jan. 1830."

The Police then ordered Mr. Watson to go home. He declined doing so; and a Sergeant of Police, getting upon an eminence, read the Riot Act! Yes, the Riot Act was read to a Presbyterian Minister and his people, assembling peaceably to worship their God! Mr. Watson advanced with the Holy Bible in his hand, towards the door of the house in which he had ministered for upwards of thirty years; and, on his attempting to enter, two soldiers prevented him, with their crossed

guns and bayonets ! With a spirit which does him immortal honour, he pushed his arm between their weapons, and persisted in his purpose. They thrust him back, and threatened, if he would not retire, they would handcuff him ; and one of them actually took off his glove, for the purpose of putting the threat into execution ! In the meantime, Mr. Montgomery made his appearance, notwithstanding the excessive inclemency of the day. The Minister followed him, expecting that he was about to be protected from an armed guard, by the interference of the Magistrate. But no such thing. The Magistrate put his back to the door, and, turning round to Mr. Watson, said, “ You are an old man ! you are a wretched old man ! Are you not ashamed of yourself in acting as you are doing ? ” Mr. Watson replied, with more warmth than was perhaps right, but which few will condemn, “ No, I am not, but you should be ashamed.” What was the consequence of this ? The order was immediately given to “ *seize that man !* ” The Police seemed to be astonished at what they heard, and shrunk back, as if unwilling to execute the command. Mr. Watson’s son, who is now a Student in the Belfast Institution, and who had accompanied his distressed father, was at some distance with a slip of paper in his hand, noting down the circumstances that were occurring. The Magistrate rushed towards him, wrested the paper and pencil out of his hands, and carried them off. He then ordered the Minister to be seized. He was seized accordingly, and conducted down the street under an armed guard ! !

I shall here beg leave to read a letter from Mr. Watson, addressed to the Moderator of this Presbytery. It is a letter calculated to reflect honour on a Christian man :---

“ DEAR SIR,—Under the distressing circumstances in which I am placed, the interest taken by you and my other brethren of the Remonstrant Presbytery of Bangor, in my situation, is truly consoling to my heart. I must, however, decline taking any part in your Presbyterial Meeting, on Saturday next, either by myself or an elder ; as I know not how far my doing so might affect the appeals which I intend to make to the justice of my country. It was very hard for me wishing to go into the Temple where I had officiated in the service of my God and Saviour, to a willing and a happy people, for more than thirty years, to be threatened with hand-cuffs, and

dragged away by the armed Police, like a felon ! but, I am convinced that God will not allow me to be brought to utter desolation, in my old age, for acting in obedience to my conscience. To my kind friends, I commit myself for advice,—to my country for justice,—and to my Creator for support under every trial.

“ It would be presumptuous in me to dictate the course you ought to pursue upon Saturday, at your meeting ; but, I trust, you will pardon me for suggesting, that all your words and resolutions should be mild and Christian. Say nothing harsh of Mr. Montgomery, of Rosemount. I hope he has acted under some false representations, and an irritated feeling ; and that he may yet be brought to think better of his conduct, and to lament the course he has pursued. At all events, mildness becomes Christians, and especially Christian Ministers. Even when compelled to assert our own rights, we should do it with the least possible injury to the characters and feelings of others.

“ That you may be guided by that wisdom which is from above, is, Dear Sir, the sincere prayer of your faithful friend and brother,

“ JOHN WATSON.

“ *Greyabbey, 12th February 1830.*”

Mr. Montgomery begged leave, in connexion with this, to read an extract of a letter from a namesake of his own,---a man who, although he might have none of what the world would call noble blood in his veins, was possessed of a greatness of soul far above all nobility :---

“ It is quite heart-rending to witness the tide of persecution that seems to prevail ; and that the people who are alone able to stay it, are so besotted and blind to their own interests, both spiritual and temporal, that they adhere to their worst enemies rather than to those who have unquestionably no other object than their good at heart. If the people were true to themselves, ignorant, beggarly landlords might be laughed at. There are, surely, as many men in Ulster, independent of such trumpery, as would procure homes and Meeting-houses for any few that they would have the hardihood or the ability to eject. I don't know what words to use, to convince you how much you would oblige me, if you would direct me how I might apply, in tens or twenties, up to one hundred pounds, or so, in alleviating the sufferings, or showing my love for any of those brave persecuted men. I am not a man at all addicted to personal expense---my pleasures and my pains arise from a source quite different from the abundance or scarcity of game, or the qualifications of my tailor---I have been a hard working fellow, and I have not, thank God, laboured in vain---but I never desired wealth for the purpose of hiding it in a ditch.”

Mr. Montgomery concluded, by moving the first resolution. His speech, as it was delivered, was one of the most pathetic appeals we have ever heard ; and the strong expression of feeling, that frequently burst out from the numerous and respectable audience, proved the deep interest which it excited.

“ Resolved,—That as it is the inalienable right of every Christian to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, without penalty or privation inflicted by his fellow-man, we shall strenuously exert ourselves, by all legal means, to secure this inestimable privilege to our unfortunate, suffering brother, the Rev. John Watson, and the Congregation of Greyabbey.”

The Rev. David White seconded the resolution, which passed unanimously.

The Rev. Fletcher Blakely rose to move the next resolution. He said,---a knowledge of these late extraordinary occurrences reached me only at nine o'clock last night, and, I can assure you, I felt so much agitated, that I was quite unable to sleep. My agitation of mind, together with the effect produced upon me by my friend Mr. Montgomery's admirable address, renders me incapable of collecting my thoughts as I should do. I shall, therefore, do little more than move the resolution which I hold in my hand, and which, I am persuaded, will meet with unanimous approbation. Had I the Westminster Confession of Faith convenient, I should read one section from that volume, which might serve me as an introduction to some remarks which I feel myself bound to make on the present interesting occasion. As that volume is not at hand, I shall read you, without note or comment, a passage from a much better book,---the Bible. (Here Mr. Blakely read the first nine verses of the fourth chapter of Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians, which end in these words :---“ We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed.”)

I am sorry there exists (he continued,) in this country, no fund for the protection of men whose religious liberty may be invaded, or who may be exposed to persecution for conscience' sake. Such funds have been of great use in England and elsewhere, and I hope that one will soon be established in this country. I differ in some respects from the sentiments delivered by my talented friend, Mr. Montgomery, of Dunmurry. I cannot help expressing my thanks, in one respect, to Mr. Montgomery, of Rosemount, for doing, what *we* long laboured, in vain, to effect. We endeavoured to overthrow the abominable Overtures of the Synod, but this gentleman has put his fingers through them in an instant. Considering that the *original faith*, as taught in the West-

minster Confession, has been injured, by the *new Overtures*, he has ordered, that Ministers shall not preach those doctrines which it was the object of those overtures to cause to be preached, and on which so much stress is pretended to be laid,—and members of Synod have basely and cowardly acted under his injunction (*Repeated cheers.*) For this we owe him our thanks, and by his skill he has thrown Synodical Ministers into a dilemma, *among many masters*, out of which no possible ingenuity can fairly deliver them. It would be presumptuous in me to detain you long, after the statement which you have already heard. Permit me merely to remind you of the effects of persecution upon our dissenting forefathers, in the times of Elizabeth, and some of her successors. The blood of the martyrs proved to be “the seed of the church,” and “partial evil” became “universal good.” It will be so at present. Such occurrences as those which have called us together, will rouse the independent spirit of the Dissenters of the Empire, to guard their interests and their privileges. And when we refer to the case of the two thousand ejected Ministers, we find that they retired to the wilds of America and the hills of Switzerland, and established principles of liberty that will never be overturned. We had expected that the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts would have united us together in good fellowship: but the contrary has turned out to be the case. I am sorry at this; but I am chiefly sorry for our opponents. I am sorry, that any men should have been guilty of such persecuting acts as they have been engaged in. Mr. Blakely concluded by moving the following resolution;—

“That we exhort them to be of ‘good cheer,’ to maintain their Christian integrity with the intrepid spirit of their Presbyterian ancestors, and to put away that ‘fear of man which bringeth a snare.’”

Captain Stannus, an Elder, seconded the resolution, which passed unanimously.

The following resolution was subsequently agreed to:—

“That a Committee be now appointed to carry these Resolutions into effect, consisting of the following members of Presbytery—Mr. Montgomery, Mr. Blakely, Ministers; Mr. William Hunter, and Mr. Gawin Orr, Elders.”

Taking up the narrative where the proceedings of the Presbytery left it, we have to state that Mr. Watson was

not detained long in custody, but permitted to return to his home and family; and on the morning of the next Sabbath Day, supposing that the wrath of man had passed away, and that unmolested and undisturbed, he would be permitted to enter his own meeting-house to instruct his flock and to raise the voice of praise and thanksgiving to the giver of every good and perfect gift; he left his house, which is about two miles from Greyabbey, and when he had proceeded about a quarter of a mile, conversing with his sons, he was suddenly surrounded by a *party of five armed police and made prisoner*, under a warrant from a Magistrate, of which the following is a copy:—

County of Down, } By William Montgomery, Esq. one of His
to wit. } Majesty's Justices of the *Peace*, in and for the
 _____ } *County of Down.*

Whereas, the Rev. John Watson, of Ballyboly, stands charged, upon oath, with rioting, and inclining to riot, at Greyabbey, in the said County, the *Sunday*, on 7th day of February inst., and also with obstructing the Constables of Police, in the execution of their duty, and opposing them;—*These are, therefore*, in His Majesty's name, requiring you forthwith to *apprehend* the body of the said John Watson, and so, if apprehended, bring before the next nearest of his Majesty's Justices of *Peace*, for the said County, that he may there enter into security to appear before the Bench of Magistrates assembled in Petty Sessions, at Greyabbey, on Tuesday, the 16th inst., to answer the said charge; and, also, that he shall, for the meantime, be of the *peace* and good behaviour to all his Majesty's liege subjects, but more especially at Greyabbey aforesaid; and for so doing this shall be your sufficient Warrant. Given under my hand and seal, at Greyabbey, this 12th day of February, 1830, thirty,

WILLIAM MONTGOMERY.

To the Constables of Police, in the Barony }
 of Ards, and all other Chief and Sub- }
 Constables in and for the said County, }
these to execute.

Two of the Police immediately proceeded to Greyabbey to inform the magistrate of their success, and to receive farther instructions; and the other three carried Mr. Watson to his own house, where he was received by his wife and daughters, with consternation, terror, and tears.

Between two and three o'clock, the two constables returned from Greyabbey. They had been detained, we learn, because Mr. Montgomery was in the meeting-house, hearing the Rev. JAMES MORGAN preaching—but,

doubtless, according to his own "*injunctions*," Mr. M. was "avoiding all controversial points of Doctrine, and strenuously instilling into the hearts of his hearers, Christian charity and brotherly love!!!" We learn, that on the next day he boasted of having preached to a respectable, regular congregation, without any disturbance or interruption!

About three o'clock in the afternoon of *Sunday*, the five Policemen carried him, by order of William Montgomery, Esq. to the seat of the *nearest* magistrate, N. D. Crommelin, Esq. about a mile distant. Mr. Crommelin was not at home, but was *expected*; and, in the meantime, Mr. Watson was accommodated with *standing room in his stable yard!!* In this situation he remained in the midst of the Police, for *upwards of an hour*; when a servant maid invited him, out of compassion, INTO THE KITCHEN!—Poor wretch! he was fain to accept the proffered courtesy, and did rest his old and weary limbs amongst the menials of "The Castle!!" We declare it, before our country, and before the world, that such was the treatment experienced by a most respectable minister of the Gospel, in the "first County in Ireland," upon the LORD'S DAY!

About five o'clock, Mr. Crommelin came home; inspected the *warrant*, and asked Mr. Watson, "If he were come to give bail?" "No," said this Christian hero, "I am *not*; I have done no wrong, I have committed no offence; for I will not admit, that it is a *crime* to enter my own meeting-house to worship my Creator." Mr. Crommelin very wisely declined farther interference, and told the Police to carry their prisoner to Mr. Montgomery, at Greyabbey. It was now quite dark, and the poor, feeble old man had to *walk*, through mud and cold, upwards of three miles, to the great man's residence, at Rosemount! He had not tasted refreshment of any kind, since early morning, and it was now after six o'clock; the Police made a signal at the door, a servant opened it, retired for orders, and returned, and said, "*Mr. Montgomery was at dinner, and would be seen when he had finished!*" And where did the wretched, exhausted minister of Christ wait, until *Dives* had finished his sumptuous repast? In the *kitchen*, perhaps? No; that would have been too much comfort: *he stood before the steps of the hall door*, in a bitter, piercing blast, until the man who ordered "brotherly kindness and charity" to be

preached, came out ! He then ascended the steps, and the great man stood within. "Are you ready to give bail?" "No, I have done no wrong," replied the humble man with the martyr's spirit. "Will you *promise* to attend the Sessions on Tuesday?" "No." "Well, then, you may go home now, as it is late: but if you don't attend, the business will be proceeded on, in your absence." "Very well, you may deal with me as you think proper." The great man turned into his room, and the minister of the Gospel, after being EIGHT HOURS A PRISONER, returned on foot to his afflicted family !!

We shall now insert the letter which Mr. Montgomery alleged as the ground on which he had proceeded in the whole of this affair:—

"Greyabbey, 23th January, 1830.

"SIR,—In the name of the Presbytery of Bangor, assembled here this day, we beg to return you our best thanks for your kind permission to transact our business in the Meeting-house; but, at the time your permission was communicated, the Presbytery had retired under the vote of a majority, and as the business had at the time been nearly concluded, they terminated their business without doors.—So far we speak in the name of the Presbytery. In what follows, the undersigned beg leave to speak in their own:—

"The Congregation of Greyabbey was erected in 1736, and the Minister, Mr. Cochrane, was an Orthodox Minister, as was the Congregation. Of the intermediate Ministers we need not speak; but as Mr. Watson, a Licentiate of the Presbytery of Dromore, must have signed the Westminster Confession of Faith, there can be no question that he entered the Congregation as an Orthodox Minister. Now that Mr. Watson has been pleased to avow Arian sentiments, and connect himself with a body of avowed Arians, you are aware that a large portion of the Congregation have been forced to withdraw from his ministry. Nearly one hundred seatholders have applied to us for preaching, and we have accordingly appointed some of our members to supply them each succeeding Lord's Day. We therefore beg leave, respectfully, to request your countenance in retaining the original right of the Orthodox members of the Congregation to the use of the Meeting-house, which their fathers received for an Orthodox people for an Orthodox Minister, under the patronage of your ancestors.

"The affairs of our Presbytery have detained us till so late an hour, that we have not been able to effect our original design, of sending a deputation of our brethren to wait upon you in person.

"We have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servants,

"H. COOKE.	JAS. MORGAN.
GEO. BELL'S.	JAS. TEMPLETON.
JOHN MACAULAY.	ALEXANDER HENDERSON.

"To WILLIAM MONTGOMERY, Esq."

We cannot afford space for commenting upon this letter, in order to show its self-contradictions and falsehoods. Important as these are, we confess that, in our view, the most important point of all is, that this letter connects every individual that has signed it with the subsequent transactions. Thus one signature is that of the minister of Donaghadee, who, therefore, in this letter, asks for Mr. M's countenance. This is at once afforded. Notice is given by Mr. Montgomery that Mr. Macaulay is to preach on the next Lord's day. He attends, and, after the violence offered to Mr. Watson, enters the house, under the protection of an armed force, and preaches.

Mr. Henderson, the minister of Lisburn, attends, on the following day, and, after meeting in the village Mr. Watson under the escort of the constabulary, enters his house and preaches. On the next, Mr. Morgan, a minister from Belfast, in full knowledge of the previous proceedings, goes through the same process. Not one of these objected at the time to the escort of an armed constabulary, or to the violence offered to a minister of the Gospel, by the Civil magistrate; nor did any of them, that we have heard of, make a single allusion, in their sermons, stating their "abhorrence" of this line of conduct; but the last of the three, with the greatest complacency, preached in the presence of the magistrate who had acted thus, without expressing disapprobation or offering reproof. Would any of their Presbyterian ancestors have acted thus? Would they not have shed their own blood, as martyrs, before they would have entered any House of Worship, at the will of a magistrate, under the protection of an armed force?

But not the least remarkable part of these proceedings is, the conduct of the Synodical Presbytery of Bangor, at their meeting in Belfast, on Friday, the 26th ultimo. Five members of that Presbytery had signed the letter to Mr. Montgomery—Mr. Morgan had stated in print, on the preceding Friday, that he neither condemned nor excused the conduct of Mr. Montgomery, in arresting Mr. Watson—and after all this, the Presbytery came to a resolution, that, "as a Presbytery, and *as individuals*, we disclaim having at any time excited discord among the people. We disavow any participation whatever in the arrest of Mr. Watson, and we express our *abhorrence*

at the treatment he received." These five ministers, as we are informed, were present at the meeting of that body, and one of them wrote and proposed the resolution.

We cannot characterize this conduct as it deserves—but simply state the fact. They wrote to Mr. Montgomery for his countenance; availed themselves of it in the precise way in which he offered it; expressed no disapprobation until the whole kingdom was re-echoing the cry of "Shame!" and then they wheel round, and leave Mr. Montgomery to make the best fight he can.

This remarkable case, which is not yet all brought to light, will excite the wonder of distant readers, and may convince the Presbyterians of Ulster, that the spirit of party is one thing and the spirit of Christianity another. We wonder how men, more especially ministers, can venture on such tergiversations, and endeavour, at the same time, to give a sanctimonious air to their proceedings. Some of our reputed Orthodox Divines are involved in such complexities and contradictions, that the utmost exertion of priestcraft cannot place them on a straight-forward path.

Jesus Christ says, "No man can serve two masters." The Westminster Confession of Faith says, "The civil magistrate hath authority, and it is his duty, to take order, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed."

The General Synod says, "That if any person thus licensed, be afterwards found not to preach the doctrines of the Trinity, original sin, justification by faith, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit; or to avow any principles in opposition to these doctrines, he shall not be continued in fellowship with this Body."

William Montgomery, Esq. the magistrate, says, "The ministers appointed by the Presbytery of Bangor have my permission to perform divine service, in the meeting-house of Greyabbey, under the proviso, that they shall *abstain from all controversial points of doctrine.*"

Messrs. Macaulay, of Donaghadee, Henderson, of Lisburn, and Morgan, of Belfast, *did preach* in Greyabbey under this injunction; and which of these *three Masters*, whether Jesus Christ, The General Synod, or William Montgomery, they were obeying, let them state if they

can!!! Let them read the document which they signed, in conjunction with three of their allies, and sent to Mr. Montgomery, of Rosemont, and which begins—“*In the name of the Presbytery of Bangor,—*let them read Mr. Montgomery’s common sense view of this document, “I have, therefore, acceded, with certain modifications, to the *request of the Presbytery of Bangor* ;”—Let them read Mr Morgan’s comment on the document, “After the Presbytery had *adjourned and separated*, the people requested us to give them a letter to the landlord of the house; we did so—*not in the name of the Presbytery* ;” and let them add to this his marvellous expression, “it does not belong to us, either to *condemn* or *excuse* it, (Mr. Watson’s arrest,) *for we are in no way concerned in it.*” Neither to condemn nor excuse the arrest of a fellow-minister!---wonderful indifference!! No way concerned in his arrest, after writing to a magistrate, slandering his opinions, and occupying, by force of arms, his pulpit for three Sabbaths!!! What a miraculous change has taken place upon these Orthodox Divines within these few days. Though they were no way concerned in the arrest of Mr. Watson, nor did any way condemn or excuse the harsh treatment he received when they were in full occupation of his meeting-house, and *confided to moral subjects* by the *ipse dixit* of a magistrate, yet their dispossession from his pulpit, and the consequent affliction, has prematurely brought on the new birth. We cast light upon their conduct and consistency, by repeating the following Resolution, which was not forced on them, but which they carried in Presbytery, on Friday last, by their own unspeakable ingenuity ;---

Resolved—“That as a Presbytery, and as individuals, we disclaim having at any time excited discord among the people. We disavow any participation whatever in the arrest of Mr. Watson : and we express *our abhorrence* of the treatment he received.”

As several Calvinistic Divines have tamely consented to abstain from preaching on *all controversial points of doctrine*, and on such, of course, as those contained in the *Synod’s Overtures*, we beg leave to give them, as a subject for a first piece of first trials,---“A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.”

EXPLANATORY LETTER OF WM. MONTGOMERY, ESQ.

The following letter, addressed to the Rev. H. Montgomery, we consider so honourable to Mr Montgomery, of Rosemount, so well calculated to illustrate the character of the arts by which he was duped, and so likely to satisfy the public mind as to the propriety of the moderate and christian course about to be pursued by Mr. Watson and the Remonstrants, that we have great pleasure in laying it before our Readers:

Greyabbey, 26th Feb. 1830.

SIR,—I have to thank you for transmitting to me the copy of the Minutes of the General Synod, held at Cookstown, in 1828, and, also, the book of 1829.

These documents and your very civil communication have completely opened my eyes to the deceits that have been practised upon me.—No man, unless his errors be intentional, can, or ought to be ashamed of acknowledging them; and, I am free to admit, that the representations which had been made to me, from a quarter and in a manner that I could hardly discredit, gave me a most false impression of the conduct and proceedings of the Remonstrants in this Parish. I now feel myself called upon to give you the most ample assurance that those erroneous impressions are completely erased from my mind; at the same time hoping that you may be induced to accept the apology which I now with perfect sincerity offer, for having ever entertained them. That my motives should have been misapprehended by you is most natural, as certainly appearances were strongly against me. I am little known beyond my own private circle; my pursuits have been such as not to place me before the public, nor am I at all ambitious of that distinction—but those who are acquainted with my disposition, well know, that of all men, I am the last who would ever listen to a suggestion which I thought could in the slightest manner infringe on the liberty of the subject, much less exercise my authority as a Magistrate with an oppressive intention, or to promote party views. In the conversation I had last week with you, I mentioned that it was farthest from my intention, at any time, to interfere with religious disputes, or, in this instance, to take any part, as was imagined, with the Synod.—This statement I now give to you, under my hand, confirmed by the assurance, that I am about to have the some-time promised Lease of this Meeting-House drawn up, to be granted in trust, for the Congregation of the Remonstrant Presbytery of Bangor. I have attentively examined the Overtures and Protest—I have compared them with the Westminster form of Presbyterian Church Government; and am sure it must be evident to the weakest understanding, that the Overtures are in direct contradiction of that code.—I shall only add, that so perfectly am I convinced of their being subversive of the liberties of Presbyterianism, that were I a member of your

Church, while I declare myself a Trinitarian in *Faith*, though certainly not according to the *Doctrine* of the Westminster Confession, I should most assuredly be a zealous Remonstrant.

I trust that you will permit me to subscribe myself, now, and for the future, my dear Sir, with esteem,

Your sincerely obliged

WM. MONTGOMERY.

P. S.—I beg you may consider yourself at full liberty to make whatever use of this letter you please.

We have also seen an official letter from Mr. Montgomery, of Rosemount, in which he proposes, in the most becoming and gentlemanlike spirit, to make every proper reparation to Mr. Watson, with regard to legal expenses and the injury done to his feelings.

Subscribers.

Our Subscribers will perceive, that the present Number is not only printed on much better paper than the former one, but that it contains *twenty-four pages* beyond what our Prospectus promised. We have received such liberal support from different quarters, that we are under the agreeable necessity of publishing 500 additional copies for this month; and, while we have resolved to print, for the future, on paper similar to that which is now before the reader, we hope to be able, from increased circulation, to keep up our pages at *forty-eight*. As a second edition of our first number is likely to be required, it shall be executed on our improved paper.

Communications, free of expense, to be forwarded to the Editors, care of Mr. SAMUEL ARCHER, Bookseller, High-street, BELFAST; who will likewise receive *Subscriptions* for the Work, and who will have *Advertisements* inserted on the cover on the following moderate terms:—a few lines, 4s.—half a page, 6s.—and a whole page, 8s.

Correspondents.

The insertion of *Sigma* is deferred until the remainder be forwarded.

The Essay on the Trinity, by a *Young Candidate for the Ministry*, will be duly attended to; as also the article signed E.

We shall be obliged for the continuation of the Series, commencing with "*The Bible, a Repository of Truth*," which we regret not being able to publish this month.

Strictures on the Confession of a Calvinist, by R. M., came too late for the present number.

We intended to insert the Petition, from the *Unitarian Presbyterians of Cork*, against Dissenters being obliged to serve as Church Wardens, but we have been compelled to omit it, from the mass of interesting intelligence requiring immediate notice.

Querist must see, that the information which he seeks from us, respecting the course of Lectures to be delivered by Mr. Blakely, of Moneyrea, is unreasonable, as we have no authority to define the term *person* or *death*, or any other term, for that gentleman; nor any foreknowledge to enable us to judge of Discourses before they are either uttered or published.

The article, by our esteemed correspondent, J. M., we did not receive in time for the present Month.

It was our intention to address the *Presbyterians* of the North on the peculiar circumstances of their Church; but we could say nothing so likely to rouse them to a proper sense of their independence, and to a well merited indignation at secret and undue clerical interference, and the meddling of the civil power and an armed force in the affairs of Presbyterian Congregations, as the simple narrative of the transactions that took place at Greyabbey.

We have received, from several highly respectable correspondents, letters, correcting mis-statements, and commenting upon articles that have appeared in the public Newspapers. Our correspondents will, we trust, at once see that it is out of our sphere to publish such letters. A *Monthly* Publication is not adapted to counteract the false mis-statements of the Newspaper press. A majority of our readers may not have seen the article upon which the comment is offered, and thus our columns would be filled with matter of no general interest. We are obliged, however, for the communications, as we can use the *facts* to advantage, in making up our articles of Intelligence, which we wish, in all cases, to be scrupulously correct.



The next Number will be published on Thursday, the 1st of April.

THE
Bible Christian.

No. III.

APRIL, 1830.

VOL. I.

A REVIEW OF SOME MODERN SYNODS.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 61.)

THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES.

THE Westminster Assembly was a Body of learned and pious men. They prosecuted the business committed to them with incessant diligence, for a longer period than any other Ecclesiastical Body, except the Council of Trent. For several years, they conducted themselves with decorum towards each other, notwithstanding the strong opposition between the Presbyterians and Independents; and without assuming any tyrannical authority over the laity. They were less tyrannical than any other Ecclesiastical Bodies; but they had no power to be otherwise; and they appear to have been more orderly: but they sat with closed doors, and were forbidden to divulge their proceedings. It is my intention, however, to review them in both aspects, and with both exceptions.

This anomalous Society was neither a Council of Bishops sitting in their own right, nor an Ecclesiastical Parliament, invested with legal authority, like the Convocation; neither a general meeting of all the Clergy of a Church, like the Irish Synods, nor a Representative Body, like the General Assembly of Scotland. The Members were selected individually, and convened by an Ordinance of the Long Parliament, dated June 23, 1643. The caution, with which that wise Body debarred them from any exercise of power or influence, is very remarkable, and very worthy of imitation. Fully aware of the presumptuous ambition of such Assemblies, when left to themselves, they appointed ten Lords and twenty Commoners to sit with the Divines, who amounted to one hundred. These were intended either to curb them or to give them some dignity in the eyes of the people. They did both. Among these assessors were some of

the ablest and most learned men of that age; such as Selden, Whitelock, Maynard, and Sir Matthew Hale. The Divines were chosen out of lists, produced by the Knights and Burgesses, of persons best qualified in their several counties, out of each of which the Parliament agreed upon two. Their residence on their livings was dispensed with, of course; and they were allowed four shillings a day for their attendance. By the wording of the Ordinance, the Parliament took care, to repress any notion, that they might do any thing of their own authority, except to deliberate on questions proposed to them. "They were to give advice and counsel to Parliament, (only) as often as they should be required. They were to be removed from place to place, and be dissolved in such manner, as *by both Houses shall be directed*. They were enjoined to confer and treat among themselves, of such matters and things, as shall be proposed by either House of Parliament, and *no other*; to deliver their advice and opinions in such manner *as shall be required*; and not to divulge the same without consent of Parliament." As if this were not enough, the Ordinance concluded with the following proviso: "Provided always, that this Ordinance shall not give them any power; nor shall they assume or exercise any jurisdiction, power, or authority ecclesiastical whatsoever, nor any other than is herein particularly expressed." Parliament also appointed their Prolocutor and his two Assessors; prescribed rules of order, and regulations for their manner of proceeding; and ordered, that, if any difference of opinion arose, they were to represent it to Parliament, that *the Houses might give further direction*.

Within a month after their assembling, the affairs of Parliament were brought to such a crisis, that they were obliged to apply to the Scotch Parliament for assistance, and to employ the Assembly to make a similar application to the Kirk. This was obtained, on the condition of extirpating Popery, Prelacy, Heresy, &c., and forming an union between the two Kingdoms, in a Confession of Faith, one Form of Church Government, and one Directory of Worship; the whole to be cemented by the solemn League and Covenant; and Scotch Commissioners were added to the Assembly. By direction of Parliament, they transmitted a state of their affairs to the Foreign Churches: and now the Episcopal Members took their departure.

It was not, however, till the year 1647, that they put the last hand to the Confession of Faith; and presented it under the title of "The Humble Advice of the Assembly of Divines and others, now, by authority of Parliament, sitting at Westminster;" but the Houses changed it to "Articles of Religion, approved and passed by both Houses of Parliament, after advice had with an Assembly of Divines called together for that purpose." This they intended for the satisfaction of Foreign Churches, which had recently agreed to the doctrines of the Synod of Dort. The Parliament did not think it proper to call it a Confession of Faith, because the sections did not begin with the words, *I confess*: nor to annex matters of Church Government, about which they were not agreed, to the Doctrinal Articles. Those chapters, therefore, which relate to Discipline, were not printed by order of the House, but recommitted, and at last laid aside, as, the whole 30th chapter, "Of Church Censures," and "Of the Power of the Keys;" the 31st chapter, "Of Synods and Councils;" a great part of the 24th, "Of Marriage and Divorce," which they referred to the Law of the land; and the fourth paragraph of the 20th, which determines what opinions and practices may lawfully be proceeded against by the censures of the Church and by the power of the Civil Magistrate. "These propositions, in which," says Neal, who was an Independent, "the very life and soul of Presbytery consist, never passed the English Parliament, nor had the sanction of law, in England; but the whole Confession, as it came from the Assembly, being sent into Scotland, was immediately approved by the General Assembly and Parliament of that kingdom." "While the Confession was carrying through the Assembly, Committees were appointed to reduce it to the form of Catechisms—one larger, for public exposition in the pulpit, according to the custom of foreign Churches; the other smaller, for the instruction of children; in both which, the articles relating to Church Discipline are omitted."

Of all Symbols or Creeds, this is the worst adapted for subscription, though generally applied to that purpose. The Episcopal Church of England requires assent to 39 Articles; the Articles of Lambeth amounted to 42; the Articles of the Church of Ireland, previous to

their adoption of the thirty-nine, in 1634, extended to 104; but the Westminster Confession contains 168; many of them including a number of abstruse and unintelligible propositions. It is a condensed Body of Divinity, to which, I am persuaded, no intelligent man can profess his assent, in all its parts, with a safe conscience. Neither Parliament nor Assembly were unanimous themselves; but though they were, there is a great difference between sanctioning a system of Religion in the lump, as a guide to the nation, and solemnly adopting every article, as a matter of personal belief, and engaging to adhere to it, and teach it to the end of life; nor was it enforced or tendered for this purpose by either of these Bodies. In the Synod of Ulster, subscription to it was not expressly enjoined for above 50 years after it was framed, when it was required "to all its Articles." Since that time the injunction has been observed with great laxity and many interruptions. In 1720, it was found necessary to pass the Pacific Act, allowing of a latitude in the terms of subscription. In 1726, the Presbytery of Antrim refused to subscribe on any terms, and left the Synod. In 1734, even their formula was falling into neglect, and continued to do so for the remainder of that century and part of this; till at last, four Presbyteries only complied with the Rule of Synod. In 1826, Mr. Carlile stated his opinion of the inefficacy of subscription, in very strong terms, to a Parliamentary Committee; and afterwards maintained his opinion in several publications. On the same occasion, Dr. Cooke, accounted for this relaxation, by a spirit of accommodation between the Calvinists and the Arminians in the Synod; and said that near a half of the Orthodox Ministers might object to subscribing absolutely. In a letter written by him to Mr. Vogan, of Armagh, during the vacancy of that congregation, copies of which were circulated, he says, "Without the provision of the Pacific Act, I should not sign it (the Confession of Faith) myself, nor require any other to do it:" and in the same letter, he appears to me to be one of those Arminians, whom he mentions, and to differ widely from the Confession on the subject of Predestination, which is the corner stone of Calvinism. The letter does him great credit, both by the suavity of its style and the liberality of the principles avowed. While this is the case, I cannot see, how Ministers of such dis-

criminating faith and tender consciences could enforce, countenance, or even permit the subscription of young students without reservation, as has been the practice in some Presbyteries. This is, I believe, universally the case in the Secession Synod.

Finally, after several attempts to render subscription absolute, it was left optional, on the part of the Presbytery, by the Code; but having no confidence in the Orthodoxy of their Presbyteries, the Synod passed those Overtures which occasioned the late rupture. This was exactly the process on the separation of the Presbytery of Antrim: not venturing to trust them with the power of licensing without subscription, they excluded them from their judicatories.

On the whole, this celebrated Confession has never served as a test, but only as a subject of litigation; and the Orthodoxy of the Body depends on the Catechisms, that is, on prejudices disingenuously instilled into the minds of children. Instead of being a Declaration of Faith and a Criterion of Truth, this precious document has only been, as Mr. Carlile says, a cloak to hypocrisy.

But let us return to civil affairs.

The salutary restraints imposed by Parliament, will explain to the reader, why this Assembly conducted itself with more moderation than others. The interposition of the Scots, however, made a material change in the affairs of England, both ecclesiastical and military. They were so wedded to their solemn League and Covenant, that it was vain to expect their assistance without adopting it; and Presbytery followed of course. The Houses, which consisted of various sects, staved it off as long as they could; but after some time, the Presbyterian party obtained a majority in Parliament, and had the whole city of London at their backs. It is said, that there were not more than 1000 Independents in the city. These, however, were, in general, persons of weight and consequence; for they discouraged the poor from joining their societies. On every occasion, the citizens were ready to issue forth, and alarm the members with their clamours. Encouraged by their support, and relying on the Scotch army in the North, who had got the King into their possession, and considered themselves as the arbiters between him and the Parliament, the Assembly thought they might venture to take a little liberty with their

masters. Accordingly, the whole body appeared at the bar, with a petition, in which they asserted the Divine Right of Presbyterian government, and complained of a clause in a late Ordinance, allowing an appeal from the Censures of the Church to a Committee of Parliament. The Commons immediately referred it to a Committee, who reported, that the Assembly had violated the privileges of Parliament, and incurred a *Præmunire*. As soon as they heard this resolution read, they adjourned in a fright, and next day appointed a Day of Fasting and Humiliation. A *Præmunire* is a process against one, who usurps ecclesiastical power, and subjects the offender to be put out of the King's peace, with forfeiture of lands and chattels, and imprisonment for life.

This question of Divine Right was a very delicate and critical point, which the Scotch made an indispensable condition of their alliance. The Parliament, therefore, though they would not suffer the Assembly to intermeddle, thought it necessary to receive the proposal with great respect; but some of their long heads, supposed to be Selden and Whitelocke, hit upon a contrivance to embarrass and divide the Divines, till times might become more favourable. They required to be satisfied as to the *Jus Divinum* of Presbytery in all its parts, with proofs for each from Scripture. They were to prove the Divine origin of *any* Church government, and specify what it is; of Congregational and Presbyterial Elderships; of Classical, Provincial, and National Assemblies; of Appeals from any of these, and their power of deciding; of Oecumenical Assemblies, and their powers; of the power of any of these to debar from the Lord's table, and of the rules, by which they act; of the power or the incapacity of the Magistrate to determine in such cases; of the illegality of the Commissioners of Parliament appointed for these purposes. These questions were drawn out into a great number of particulars, so as to be extremely embarrassing, especially as the Independents formed a considerable portion of the assembly, and acknowledged no authority of one Church over another.

During a debate on this subject, a lay member proposed this dilemma: "If this government be not *Jure Divino*, no opinion of any Council can make it what it is not; and if it be *Jure Divino*, it continues so still, although you do not declare it to be so." The same ob-

jection is valid against a declaration, in favour of any abstract principle or speculative doctrine. If the Trinity be a truth, no vote of a Synod or declaration of individual members can make it a falsehood ; if it be a fiction, the Athanasian Creed itself cannot make it a truth. If the doctrines of Calvin be Scriptural, they will remain so, notwithstanding any denial of them ; if unscriptural, no subscription to a Confession of Faith can make them part of Scripture.

The Ordinance, to certain parts of which the Assembly objected, was, for erecting Presbyteries, and for that purpose establishing Sessions or Elderships. These were to be followed by Provincial and National Assemblies. It is observable, that in every instance, the number of lay elders was double that of Ministers ; another mark of their jealousy of the Clergy ; and that the whole Establishment was declared to be only upon trial. With this Ordinance all parties were dissatisfied, Episcopalians and Independents, English and Scotch Presbyterians ; but the Commons declared, that “ they would not consent to the granting an arbitrary and unlimited power and jurisdiction to near 10,000 judicatories, not consistent with the fundamental laws and government of the kingdom, and excluding the Parliament of England from the exercise of all ecclesiastical jurisdiction.”

Had the Assembly and their party been content with this arrangement, we might now have a Presbyterian Establishment and a Republican Government throughout Great Britain and Ireland. But they happily delivered us from both ; for Toleration was a word detestable in their ears. Rather than suffer it, they lost all. The proposals of the Independents were most moderate. They acquiesced in the Establishment and the Confession of Faith, and sought for no comprehension ; but only for Indulgence and Toleration ; and that their Churches might have the power of ordination and Church censures within themselves. They consented to have the same Church officers, and to require the same qualifications from them and other members that the Presbyterians required ; to hold occasional communion with the Presbyterian Churches, in Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and receive their members to communion ; and to hold Ministerial communion with the Presbyterian Pastors. They would even consent to a limitation of their congre-

gations to a certain number, as so many receptacles for pious persons of tender consciences. When the Presbyterian Divines declared against conceding them liberty of conscience, Jeremiah Burroughs, in the name of the Independents, said, "that, if they might not have liberty to govern themselves in their own way, as long as they behaved peaceably toward the Civil Magistrate, they were resolved to suffer, or go to some other place in the world, where they might enjoy their liberty." But there was a kind of Synod of City Divines, every Monday, at Sion College, to support the Assembly at Westminster, in their opposition to the toleration of sectaries; who besought them, by letter, "to oppose with all their might the great Diana of the Independents, and not to suffer their new establishment to be strangled in the birth by a lawless Toleration." The Scotch nation was also engaged in this service.

This monopolizing and intolerant spirit is the besetting sin of all Establishments, and especially of all Synods; and it rendered nugatory all the learning and wisdom of that venerable body. After the Presbyterian government had been thus established, it was exercised with a degree of intolerance that must astonish those, who consider how lately they had groaned under Episcopal tyranny. The necessity of self-defence roused the spirit of the Independents and other sectaries, who, finding themselves predominant in the army, soon dissolved the new Establishment, dismissed the Houses of Parliament, beheaded the King, and substituted Cromwell in his place. The resentment of the Presbyterians against those, who had thus subverted their spiritual power, was, I apprehend, a main motive for their subsequent zeal in the Royal cause, and in the unconditional restoration of Charles II. Having lost their solemn League and Covenant, they would rather take their chance of a comprehension in the Episcopal Church, or even live in subjection to it, than associate with sectaries, or submit to their enemies. They, accordingly, assisted Monk in delivering these nations, bound neck and heels, into the hands of that abandoned, perjured profligate. They, at the same time, reinstated the Hierarchy; vainly hoping for that toleration, which they had refused to their brethren, and to be comprehended in a Church, which they had extirpated *root and branch*. Who, after this, can

sympathise with them in their complaints of the treatment they received at the Savoy, where they were the dupes of the cavaliers and the laughing stock of the bishops? The treatment, which they met with from the Arminian Bishops, bore a close resemblance to that of the Remonstrants at Dort from the Presbyterian Synod. Thus, their whole system vanished in air, "thin air," before it extended its operation beyond the London and Lancashire districts. Other counties had only established voluntary associations of Ministers, some of which continue to this day, though with very different ideas of doctrine and discipline.

The immediate cause of their downfall is thus explained by Baxter:—"It was the Ministers," says he, "who lost all by forsaking the army, and betaking themselves to an easier and quieter way of life. When the Earl of Essex's army went out, each regiment had a Chaplain: but after Edge-hill fight, most of them went home, and left the army to their own conduct." He concludes, that, if they had but had Ministers, who would have followed his measures, the King, the Parliament, and Religion might have been saved.—"The army," says Neal, "being destitute of Chaplains, the officers set up for preachers in their several regiments; and, when their imaginations were heated, they gave vent to the most crude and undigested absurdities, and took possession of the country pulpits, till they spread the infection over the whole nation."—After putting down the divine right of kings, and trampling on the crown and mitre, they would set up the divine right of Presbyters, and trample on the people. Had they followed the example of their Scotch friends in the garrison of Carrickfergus, who were then organizing the regiments into regular congregations, with Ministers, Sessions, and Presbyterial discipline, they might have perpetuated their power.

Thus have I sketched the character of this Assembly, as far as it appeared in their public acts. Before next month I hope to get a peep into the conclave.

ERASMUS.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

[The author of the following paper is a young candidate for the Ministry, who was brought up an "Orthodox Presbyterian," but who has latterly become a "Bible Christian."]

THE TRINITY.

"Upon her forehead was a name written—MYSTERY!"

REV. xvii. 5.

ON reviewing the doctrines which the Synod of Ulster some time ago ordered her communion to believe, I naturally considered how far my religious opinions should warrant me in ranging myself beneath the standard of the Faithful. I took up the doctrine of the Trinity, which stands at the head of the legislative creed. It may be asked—Did I not understand this all-important doctrine, after attending a regular course of lectures delivered by an Orthodox Theologian? Did I not believe the Trinity? Candid reader, bear with me if I confess, that, though I regarded my Orthodoxy with the greatest complacency, I really was not so far master of the ingenious arguments by which that doctrine is supported, as to say from my heart, whether I believed it or not. I resolved, however, if possible, to ascertain something determinate with regard to this subject. The unsettled state of our Church confirmed my resolution. Looking forward to a profession of high responsibility, I began to feel that I was called upon, not only in duty to those whom I might be appointed to instruct, but in duty to myself, to inquire into the reason and the grounds of the opinions which I professed. My study hereupon presented the novel circumstance, of a student who had just finished his curriculum, recommencing his theological inquiries, and pursuing a course of Biblical and historical readings, which led to a decided, and, I must ever say, a happy revolution of sentiment.

I had heard much of the Confession of Faith. With many with whom I conversed, subscription seemed a matter of course. I thought proper, however, to read it before subscription. The recollections of its strange phraseology, and its scholastic profundity, are still before me. It purported to set forth the peculiarities of Orthodoxy, and I was rather surprised that I did not understand it at once. I had expected to find something in it

that I had seen before in the Scriptures. I had anticipated, at least, a concise and simple view of the Christian system. What was my astonishment, when, in reference to one of the most essential points of faith, I was not able to discover one sentence expressed in the language of the Bible—not one word but what involved the matter in obscurity and mystery. I closed the Confession of the Westminster Divines: I found that “I had been seeking the living among the dead.” The following is the article on the Trinity from that work:—

“In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Son is eternally begotten of the Father, the Holy Ghost is eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son!”

I must say, I considered this rather a presumptuous piece of information. I felt there must be something wrong about it; yet, from my predilections, and from a certain constitutional delicacy of conscience, I could not pronounce against it, until the matter had undergone a fair trial. Behold me then seated with my Article of Faith and my Bible before me—

“My bane—and antidote!”

I searched the Scriptures. My prayer ascended to that Being whom, notwithstanding the errors of education, I was still willing to address as my Father: I asked His teaching. I compared the Article of Faith with the language of the Bible. I could find nothing there about “*persons*” in the Godhead—nothing about the “*substance*” of God. There was no intimation of the “*eternal begetting*” of the Son—no mention of the “*eternal proceeding*” of the Holy Ghost! Besides, it struck me with regard to the Holy Ghost, that if it were *eternally proceeding*, it must be proceeding even *now*, and must continue to do so *forever*, without arriving at its full procession. But I had heard that it might be possible to “*infer*” the Trinity from the Bible, though it is not there expressly contained in words. I tried the *inferential* mode of deducing this doctrine: It would not do. In my reasonings, I have always had a liking to possess certain data, which in this instance were not to be found: so my deductions were brief. From my soul then, I must affirm, that I have not been able to discover the doctrine of the Trinity in the Book of God.

In the course of my inquiries on this subject, I exa-

mined several Orthodox creeds. I read the Parenthetical Creed of St. Athanasius, with its fulminating clause; I referred to the Hypostases of Dr. Howe: to the Modal Trinity of Dr. Wallis: to the Differential Trinity of Archbishop Tillotson: to the Reciprocating Trinity of Bishop Bull; to the Dependencies of Dr. Thomas Burnet: to the three Beings of Bishop Burgess! After all, I was not able to account for the doctrine of the Trinity. I examined the Nicene, or rather Constantinopolitan Creed. In reference to our Lord Jesus Christ, I found such expressions as these, "God of God, light of light, very God of very God, being of one substance with the Father!" I could not tell where this language came from. Every Protestant, who reflects for a moment, must feel that there is not a shadow of it in the Bible.

I was much affected the other day by a conversation on this subject with a young friend, who has been accustomed to read his Bible, and prizes it highly. An observation which he made, coming from a pure and unsophisticated mind, had to me almost the weight of testimony. Being told by some of his friends, who are of the established Church, "that he must believe the Trinity," he said, with more anxiety in his bright countenance than I had expected, "I wish, very much, there was something about the Trinity in the Bible!" Permit me to add, while I apologize for this little digression, that, if the Trinity were an essential doctrine of Christianity, there ought not only to be *something*, but *something very explicit* about it in the Bible.

Having searched there in vain for the *Triune God*, in the instructions of Jesus Christ, and in the preaching of his Apostles; having exhausted all my imagination and all my credulity, in endeavouring to comprehend the human creeds that I consulted; I was obliged to direct my inquiries somewhere else. The records of the Church Historian presented a fair field for investigation. The ponderous folio lay once more on my table, and whatever pains it might cost, I determined to prosecute the matter to its source. I traced this earth-born production, for such I must now call it, through conclaves, and assemblies, and councils; I pursued it till it led me through the gates of the Reformation into the region of the Dark Ages—I saw its mysterious shade hover long and darkly

over Rome--the nurse of corruptions. It still continued in view, until we came in the upward course of time to about the three hundredth year of the Christian æra; and here the mystic vision disappeared in the caves of Upper Egypt, or was dissipated in the vapour of Eastern fable! But let me speak without a figure. It is a remarkable and incontrovertible fact, that the early Christians, until the close of the third century, knew nothing of the doctrine of the Trinity. They lived, simple believers, contented with "the faith once delivered to the Saints." They worshipped "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," in sincerity and truth, without inquiring whether the Son was as old as the Father, or whether he was of a similar substance. If a convert professed to believe, that "Jesus Christ was the Son of the living God," and showed by his holy life, that he had true repentance, he was admitted at once to Christian communion.

I have subjoined a few ideas on the origin and progress of the doctrine of the Trinity. I trust they may be of use to some individuals, who, like me, have been brought up in the leading strings of a childish and overweening faith, and who begin to long for "the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free." If, in connexion with the preceding sketch of personal history, the Editors of "The Bible Christian" consider this brief outline of the history of the Trinity of sufficient interest to the reader, I may at some future period take up the subject in detail: in the meantime, I must not occupy too much of this excellent publication.

I believe there are few matters then, connected with the corruptions of Christianity, which can be more easily settled, than the origin of the unscriptural doctrine of the Trinity. The resemblance between this doctrine, and the speculations contained in some of the ancient systems of philosophy, brings us within a certain range of inquiry. In the Heathen cosmogonies, we find such terms as these: Quaternion—Triad—Duality—Monad. These terms were employed by philosophers to signify the first principles to which they referred the visible creation. Thus, some held that there was a Quaternion, or four principles in Nature; others maintained there was a Triad, or three principles; others again had recourse to a Duality; while a few attempted to account

for all things by a Monad, or One First principle. At the introduction of Christianity, it is well authenticated, that the Gnostic philosophy prevailed in the East. This system was a mixture of Platonian with Indian and Egyptian mythology. Now, it is well known that Plato taught the doctrine of a Triad. The three Platonic principles were—the Chief Cause, the Logos or Reason, and the Soul of the World. When Christianity, then, had made the round of the Roman empire, and embraced among its converts individuals from every sect and system, it so happened that the Gnostic converts, who prided themselves on their superior science, began to *Platonize*, and to use much diligence in tracing resemblances between the Christian religion and the philosophy with which their minds had been so deeply imbued, while heathens. Finding some prepossessing analogies between their Triad and the accounts given in the Sacred Writings, of God, of Jesus Christ, and of the Spirit of inspiration, they gradually lost sight of the Divine Unity, and, led away by a false wisdom, substituted the ideas of a vague *Tritheism*. It was by this unnatural union, I am bold to say, between Heathenism and Christianity, that the doctrine of the Trinity assumed, by degrees, the shape in which it has appeared in later times. It may be satisfactory to know that the terms “person” and “substance,” in reference to the Godhead, were first used in the third century, during the Sabellian and Noetian controversies. Jesus Christ was by this time deified; and the Virgin, his mother, barely escaped an apotheosis. She was appointed, however, to be the “Mother of God.” When Christianity allied itself to political power in the reign of Constantine, it lost much of its pure and heavenly character. Constantine, a heathen, who was not baptised till he was on his deathbed, legislated a long time for the Christian world. He presided at the Council of Nice; and resolving to unite his Heathen and Christian subjects, he took advantage of some disputes that rose in the Church, and enacted a certain version of the Trinity. It was not until half a century afterwards, at the Council of Constantinople, that the Holy Ghost was fully recognized. It was then and there decreed, “that the Holy Ghost was Lord.” The finishing touch was not given to their Trinity until some time in the fifth century, when the controversy

arose about the procession of the Holy Ghost. The Greek Church maintained that the Holy Ghost proceeded from *the Father alone*. It was decreed, and finally settled by the Roman Church, that the Holy Ghost proceeded from *the Father and the Son*. Thus a schism was produced which exists to this day. It is but justice to observe, before we dismiss the subject, that Athanasius, who figured at the Council of Nice, and who led the Trinitarian party, was educated by an Eremite of Upper Egypt, to which region we had previously traced the first developement of the Trinity. Athanasius was deeply versed in the cryptic lore of that country: and the creed, which still bears his name, discovers amply the source from which it was derived, and does honour to his sophistry and metaphysics, though it argues, in a high degree, his want of Christian love.

With regard to the success of Trinitarianism, it appears from the age in which it rose, an event naturally to have been expected. The idea of a God in human form was easy and familiar to the ancients;—they could not conceive a being elevated above the rank of mortals, without calling him god;—even Victors and Emperors were enrolled as divinities. Any doctrine, then, coming with the high sanction of Christian authority, that resembled the prevailing polytheism, would undoubtedly have a preference. In those days, there were only a few manuscript copies of the Scriptures, and the ignorant and unthinking people, having no access to the fountain of truth, swallowed the drugged and impure draught which an interested priesthood administered. Thus men became Trinitarians, not aware that thereby they gave up the first commandment of the Gospel—“Hear, O Israel, the Lord the God is ONE GOD.”

Viewing the Scriptural announcement, therefore, that there is “but one God, and one Mediator between God and man—the man Christ Jesus,” as a simple and intelligible subject of faith, I have, for a considerable time, given up “Orthodoxy,” and I trust I shall ever remain

“A BIBLE CHRISTIAN.”

THE BIBLE A REPOSITORY OF TRUTH.

WHAT is Truth? was a question asked by the Roman Governor, who ordered the crucifixion of our Saviour, without waiting for a reply, or appearing to be in the least degree concerned about it. What is Truth? *is*, however, a question, which every Bible Christian will often put, with a sincere desire to obtain a satisfactory reply. Truth is the object of his diligent research; pursued through evil report and good report, and, when found, or, which is the same thing to him, supposed to be found, is adhered to with steadiness, even though his profession of it should expose him to the severest sufferings. Truth is directly opposed to error; truth, therefore, is always desirable; but truth is not in all cases of equal importance; and it is particularly desirable, if possible, to learn what is that truth, which we should spare no pains to attain, and having attained should firmly adhere to. Now this is not the mere establishment of a true system of moral or natural philosophy, however gratifying such may be; or true details of past or present events, but what must concern truth as it tends to fit us in this state of being, for happiness in a future one. Of such truth, the Bible is the great repository. It will not, indeed, gratify the vain curiosity of idle speculatists; still less will it settle "the perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds." The object of its author is much more exalted—it is to enlighten the human understanding with that knowledge which will influence the conduct of men, and serve as a lamp to guide their feet into the path of happiness. To render human beings such as nature dictates, and the Great Author of nature intends, nothing can be of so much importance as that they should form just ideas of their own faculties, situation, and expectations, and entertain worthy conceptions of that Great and Glorious Being on whom they depend. Now the Bible, and particularly the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is a repository of truth on these most important subjects. Respecting human nature, we learn that it consists of body and mind, each of which has its respective powers and enjoyments; that the appetites of the former are much inferior in dignity

to the capacities of the latter ; that the pleasures arising from the indulgence of the one can bear no comparison, either in value or permanency, with the pleasures which flow from the exercise of the other ; that man is endowed with social affections, which render habits of generosity and kindness essential to his happiness ; that he is capable of the sublime emotions of genuine piety ; consequently, that his happiness must depend, in a great measure, on the sentiments which he cherishes with respect to the Supreme Being ; and finally, that his nature, and consequently his pursuits, are eminently distinguished from those of other creatures, by a capacity and expectation of being hereafter, and ever enjoying an immortal existence. These are ideas of human nature, which, though not established by a formal course of reasoning ; after the manner of philosophers, are every where supposed to be true, and taken for granted as the natural ground of the several precepts which regulate the exercise of the social and religious affections, and which prescribe the practice of every moral virtue, as the only means of rendering us happy both in this life and the next. In the Bible, also, we have the most important truths concerning the nature, perfections, and government of God. There he is represented to us as an invisible and spiritual Being ; the Author of all existence and happiness ; himself unchangeable, eternal, and independent ; as the Supreme Director of all events, without whose providence not even a sparrow falleth to the ground ; as the Moral Governor of the world, under whose inspection men are continually acting, and before whose tribunal they must finally appear ; and as the benevolent Father of his creatures, who bountifully dispenses the blessings of his providence, even among the unworthy ; exercising compassion towards the wretched, and lenity towards the guilty. The Bible speaks of the Deity in such language as this, “ the ever blessed God, who only hath immortality ;—the Lord God Almighty ;—the only wise God, to whom all his works are known from the beginning of the world ; of whom are all things ; from whom cometh every good and perfect gift ; who giveth us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons ; who granteth his Holy Spirit to them that ask him ; whose commandments are not grievous ; all whose ways are just and true ; with whom is no

respect of persons—whose sun shineth upon the evil and the good; who is long suffering and merciful, not willing that any should perish; and, to sum up all, who is love, and dwelleth in love for ever.” Such is the God of the Bible, and such is the God of natural religion, as may be inferred from all his works. Here we have truth admitted by all who believe the Bible to be true, and in it we have the foundation of moral practice. Whatever apparent inconsistencies there may be in their opinions on other subjects, or however they may explain some, so as to accommodate them to their peculiar views, no Christians will deny that such are the attributes of God as revealed in the Bible, and as might be proved by numerous quotations. So far all have sure and common ground. And is the man who holds such truth, and is influenced by it, to be considered as destitute of all hope—as having less prospect of eternal happiness than a “murderer or a prostitute,” because he cannot receive, as true, doctrines which some profess to find in the same Bible, but which he is unable to discover? But is this all the truth which the Bible teaches us? Far from it;—it reminds us of what, if we reflect, we must be all sensible of, that we have acted in a manner very unworthy of the character of children of God, and very offensive to him *who is of purer eyes than to behold evil*. It holds up to us a Saviour and a Mediator, through whom we may obtain the forgiveness we cannot possibly deserve,—a Saviour whose instructions carry with them the authority of God himself—whose character commands our esteem and love; and whose sufferings, for the sake of guilty men, entitle him to the warmest gratitude. And are men to be treated as outcasts of society, to be held up to abhorrence, and branded with the most odious epithets, because they cannot find in the same Bible that this Saviour is the Great God himself?—because they cannot *identify* him with that Being to whom he himself referred as his Father?—because they cannot draw the same *inference* from a few texts which others do, or cannot submit their judgments to the dictates of men whom they believe to have no better means of knowing than themselves? The Bible Christian will hold fast that which is clearly taught, and cannot be refuted; he will lay less stress on the inferences of men who are fallible, and he will, above all, keep in mind,

that practice is the end of knowledge, and that when the great day of judgment shall arrive, it will be by his *works* that he will be judged. He will, indeed, have need of mercy, but he knows on whom he has trusted, and that mercy will not be refused to a sincere penitent by that Judge who is more anxious for the salvation of sinful mortals than they even appear to be themselves. He will remember that *there is joy in heaven over repenting sinners*, and that, however the Popes of the Christian world may decide, higher authority has pronounced that "God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation" (and we may safely add, in every sect,) "he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." K.

SCRIPTURE ITS OWN INTERPRETER.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 84.)

HAVING stated in my last a sufficient number of passages from the Old and New Testaments, to establish that important and cardinal doctrine of the personal Unity of God; I now proceed to bring together, for the consideration of your readers, our blessed Lord's declarations concerning himself, and his relation to the God and Father of all. I solicit the serious attention of your readers to this most important subject. If there be a distinction between true and false—if there be, in the constitution of the human mind, a satisfaction in ascertaining what is true, and a repugnance at entertaining false opinions, simply because the one is true and the other false, without regard to consequences or the effects upon our worldly interest: it is surely of inconceivable moment to arrive at correct views on the sublimest of all subjects; to be truly informed as to the nature and office of him, to whom, (as the Minister of the Father's will, and the voluntary instrument for effecting the gracious purposes of infinite love, in the salvation of a sinful world, and the reconciliation of man to his God)—we owe our redemption from the dominion of sin; our deliverance from the terror of death and the power of the grave; and our glorious hopes of a resurrection to Eternal Life. Were we to look

at the subject merely as one of speculative knowledge, with what intense interest should it be viewed? Into what insignificance does all other knowledge sink when compared with it? And yet how is it treated by mankind in general? How many are searching with indefatigable industry into the truth of the alleged facts of ancient and modern history! How many are pursuing investigations into the nature of the ultimate particles of matter! How many are tracing the properties of numbers, and, after passing years upon years in the utmost intensity of thought, are supremely happy if they can develope some new property; unravel some intricate problem, or invent some formula for finding what no man ever found before! How many receive most exquisite pleasure in tracking the wanderings of a comet; predicting its return in future centuries, and in marking the paths of the planetary bodies! How cheerfully will men submit to toil and hardship—in traversing uninhabited and trackless regions, and feel repaid by having added a new species to the list of animals—or discovered some piece of workmanship of the Almighty's hand, that had hitherto “blushed unseen” and “wasted its sweetness on the desert air!” Do I blame this curiosity? No. It is inherent in our nature—but I see with wonder, that while men are so eagerly bent on knowledge for itself alone, they are ever willing to acquiesce most implicitly, most lethargically, as if they were dead to all thought, as if their innate curiosity were annihilated, in the dictation of some creed or in the usurped dominion of those who lord it over conscience. But it is most delightful and heart-cheering to find that a spirit of inquiry is gone abroad—that it has moved over the face of the still waters, and, though the agitation has been in the first instance a little stormy; it will prove, I hope, to be the moving of the waters of Bethesda's pool, and bring some healing along with it. The glorious success that has attended **THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN** should rouse us all to put our hands to the plough—we already see the revivifying powers of a genial spring—may God grant that we may see the summer come to ripen the fruit, and may he grant us grace not to be weary, knowing that we shall reap the harvest if we faint not.

There are, occasionally, remarks appended to some of the passages in the following list. In most of them the

object in view is to show the inapplicability of that expedient, to which the Trinitarians have so frequently to resort—that Christ was sometimes speaking in his divine, and at others in his human nature. I might, indeed, have taken other ground, and have assailed this notion as a most gratuitous assumption, purely of human invention, without the slightest countenance from Scripture, and most derogatory to our Saviour's character : but I thought that it would cause less interruption in the series which I had begun, to introduce a few remarks after some of the texts, that would set this matter in a clearer point of view. The dishonour done to our Saviour—the degradation of that most beautiful and glorious character by such a proceeding, can be shown by one example--- When it is said that “ of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in Heaven, *neither the Son, but the Father only,*” the Trinitarian explanation is, that it was in his human nature he was speaking. Now does this not charge our Saviour with gross prevarication or dissimulation ? If he who uttered those words, knew, *in any capacity*, what he states solemnly that he did *not* know, what security can we have that, in any other declaration of the same person, there is not a mental reservation that would completely destroy its force ? What would be thought of a witness in a court of justice, that, after swearing to his ignorance of a certain fact, would afterwards declare that he denied his knowledge of it in one capacity, but that he knew it in another ? Remember, I charge not any with intending this insult to our Lord's character---they do it, I am sure, unwittingly and in ignorance ; but they should seriously consider whether that ignorance is of such a kind, as to be any justification for heaping so vile a charge on him who was the Truth as well as the Way and the Life.

ON THE NATURE AND PERSON OF CHRIST.

Passages wherein Christ declares himself to be subordinate to the Father—deriving his Being from him—receiving from him his Divine Power, Authority, and other attributes—and acting, in all things, wholly according to the will of the Father.

MATT. vii. 21.—Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven ; but he that doeth the will of *my Father*, who is in Heaven.

MATT. x. 32.—“Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will *I* confess before my Father which is in Heaven.”—and v. 33.

——40.—“He that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.”
—See Mark, ix. 37, and Luke, x. 16.

MATT. xi. 25, 26, 27.—“At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; Even so Father, for so it seemed good in *thy* sight. All things are *delivered* unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.”

Observe here, that if it be in his human nature that he offers up his prayer to the Father; it is also in his human nature that all things are delivered to him; and, that it is on this ground of “all power in Heaven and Earth” being given unto him, that he gives the Apostles their commission to Baptize, in Matt. xxviii. 18, 19.; and this destroys all the force of that very weak argument for his Supreme Deity, founded on this commission.

MATT. xii. 50, “Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.”

——xvi. 27, “For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels.”

Why “in the glory of his Father,” if his own glory were equal? Could it be said, without blasphemy, that the Father was to appear in the Glory of the Son? and yet, why not, if both were equal?

MATT. xx. 23, “But to sit on my right hand and on my left, is *not mine* to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.”

——xxvi. 39, “O, my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, *not as I will*, but as thou wilt—see v. 42; see also LUKE, xxvii. 42 and 43, where this additional circumstance is mentioned, “and there appeared an angel unto him from Heaven strengthening him.”

——53, “Thinkest thou that I cannot now *pray to my Father* and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels.”

If it were in his Divine Nature or Godhead that he prayed, we have one Lord God Almighty praying to another Lord God Almighty, for what equally belonged to both or to a third jointly: if it were in his Human Nature or Manhood that he prayed, why did he pray to God the Father, rather than to God the Son, to God the Holy Ghost, or to the whole Trinity.

MATT. xxviii. 18, "All power is *given* to me in Heaven and in Earth." See the observations on Matt. xi. 25, &c.

We are continually told with the greatest assurance by Trinitarians, that none but a Being essentially Almighty could be a sufficient Saviour for any human being to put his trust in---do they mean that when God could *give* to his Son *all* power in Heaven and Earth, and could commit to him *all* judgment, he could not give him the power or privilege of saving even one individual---or the whole world. "By what power (says Cyprian, as quoted by Dr. Clarke,) can *he* obtain remission of Sins in Baptism, who denies God the Creator to be the Father of Christ? when even that very power, by which we are baptized and sanctified, Christ received from the Father, whom he acknowledged to be greater than himself, by whom he prayed to be glorified, whose will he fulfilled even unto the obedience of drinking that cup and of undergoing death."

MARK, xiii. 52, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in Heaven, *neither the Son*, but the Father."

The answer given to this decisive text is, that Christ means the Son in his human nature---but where do they learn this? Is it not inconsistent with his placing himself between the angels and the Father? And does it not still appear that only one person, the Father, out of three co-equal persons constituting the same God, had a fore-knowledge of that particular day and hour.

LUKE, xi. 20. "But if I *with the finger of God* cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come unto you."

----- xxii. 29, "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father *hath appointed unto me*."

JOHN, iv. 34, "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the *will of him that sent me* and to finish *his work*."

----- v. 19.---"Then answered Jesus, and said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can *do nothing of himself* but what he seeth the Father do: for whatsoever he doeth these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son and sheweth him all things that himself doeth, and he will show him greater works than these that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but *hath committed all judgment* unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they have *honoured the Father*. *He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him."

* I have great pleasure in illustrating this passage, by an extract from the very judicious and useful Discourse on the Office and

JOHN, v. 24.—“ Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life.”

To hear the words of Christ is in Scripture language to be obedient to them. He, therefore, that obeys Christ from the full confidence that God the Father had sent him, may have everlasting life, and consequently may be saved without belief in the Trinity, &c.

JOHN, v. 25.—“ Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.”

— 26.—“ For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.”

— 27.—“ And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.”

Observe how this harmonizes with the declarations in PHIL. ii. 8, 9, that it was because he was found in fashion as a man, &c. that he was exalted to his present glory and power---as is also asserted in HEB. ii. 9. But how could he that had *all* power and *all* glory be exalted to greater power and greater glory!

JOHN, v. 30.—*I can of mine ownself do nothing*: as I hear I judge, and my judgment is just, because *I seek not mine own will* but the will of the Father which hath sent me.”

— 36.—But I have a greater witness than that of John: for the

Character of Christ, by an American Minister, the Rev. HENRY WARE, of Boston, which may be safely recommended to your readers, as may his Recollections of Jotham Anderson:

“ In all this we find fully maintained the distinction between the honours which Christians are to render to their God and to their Saviour. The infinite God claims them in his own name, by his own right, for his own glory. Jesus claims them not in his own name, nor by his own right, nor for his own glory. He refers them constantly to the Father. Even in the powerful language of our text, he challenges to himself no independent honours, but expressly founds his title on the appointment of God. The Father judgeth no man, but *hath committed* all judgment to the Son; that all men should honour the Son as they honour the Father. Here he declares that he is appointed to be judge, not that he is so by inherent right; and that, in the Execution of that office, he is to be honoured as the Father who appointed him, and in whose Place and for whose Glory he acts. In this manner the honour demanded for Jesus is on account of the offices to which God has exalted him; his own authority or right is never alleged as a ground of it, as it is always in the case of God himself. ‘Of himself (he says) the Son can do nothing. All power is committed to me of my Father.’”

works that my Father hath *given* me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that my Father hath sent me.

JOHN, v. 43.—“ I am come in my Father’s name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.”

—vi. 37.—“ All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, *not to do mine own will*, but the will of him that sent me.”

Observe, he speaks of “ not doing his own will, but his Father’s,” in the same nature in which he came down from heaven, *i. e.* according to Trinitarians, as Lord God Almighty. The words cannot mean; I, as Lord God Almighty, came down from heaven not to do mine own will as a man, or in my human nature, but, as a man, to do the will of him that sent me.

JOHN, vi. 39.—“ And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.—See v. 40.

—vii. 16.—“ My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.”—See v. 28, 29.

—viii. 42.—“ Jesus saith unto them, if God were your Father, ye would love me; for I proceeded forth, and came from God, neither *came I of myself*, but he sent me.”—See v. 26, 29.

—54.—“ Jesus saith, if I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me, of whom ye say that *he* is your God. Yet ye have not known him, but I know him.”

It is plain that when our Lord says “ of whom ye say that he is your God,” that he considers them right in so saying. Thus, then, this verse proves the unity of the God of the Jews, and makes him to be the same that is distinguished by the name of the Father, and not made up of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three persons in one God.

JOHN x. 17, 18.—“ Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. *This Commandment have I received of my Father.*”—See xiv. 10, 24, 31.—xv. 10, 15.

—36.—(In connexion with the two preceding verses) “ Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world,—Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?”

It is here implied that the reason for his being the Son of God is his being sanctified by the Father, and sent into the world.

JOHN xii. 49, 50.—“ For I have not spoken of myself, for the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should

say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting; whatsoever I speak, therefore, even *as the Father said unto me*, so I speak.

JOHN xiii. 3.—“Jesus, knowing that the Father had *given* all things into his hands, and that he was *come from God, and went to God*.”

—xiv. 28.—“If ye loved me ye would rejoice, because I said I go to my Father, for my *Father is greater than I*.”

—vii. 1, 2, 3.—“These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said: Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee, as thou hast *given* him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as *thou hast given him*. And this is life eternal, that they might know *thee, the only true God*, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.”

Can words be framed more explicitly, asserting that the Father, whom Jesus was addressing in prayer, who gave him power over all flesh, is the **ONLY TRUE GOD**.

JOHN xvii. 5, 6, 7.—“And now, O Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou hast given me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word: now they have known that all things, whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and that thou didst send me.”—See x. 9, 10.

—11.—“And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep, through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.”—See also v. 21, 22, 23, compared with John x. 30, and with Acts iv. 32.

—24.—“Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold *my glory*, which *thou hast given me*, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.”

Could it be more distinctly stated that our Saviour's glorified state is the *gift* of the Father; and how could this be if the Son's glory were essentially his own, as the Father's glory is essentially *his*?

JOHN xx. 17.—Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father, but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto *my* Father and your Father, and to *my* God and your God.

Remember what the Apostle Paul says, (in Ephes. iv. 10.) “He that descended, is the same also that ascended up, far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.” It is this same glorious Being that calls God his Father and his God. If our Lord's argument were a good one, that Christ could not be David's Son, because David called

him Lord—how much stronger is the argument, that when Jesus called the Father HIS GOD, he never designed that he himself should be considered the same God.

Well might the Evangelist close the chapter by saying ; that “ these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name.”

This list might easily have been doubled ; and if the inferential passages had been included, nearly all the Gospels must have been transcribed. All these declarations are our Saviour’s own. How clear—how decided—how important are they ! May your readers lay them to heart, and ponder upon them. They convey to us the most valuable information that we can possess, concerning the nature and office of him who was the “*Desire* of nations” before he came, and is the hope, the confidence, and joy ; the way, the truth, and the life to all that unfeignedly believe in him and sincerely love him. Whenever I take a view of these declarations, I am astounded at the prevailing hardness of heart to believe, what Scripture has so expressly revealed concerning the Holy Son of God, and the ground of his sufficiency to pardon sin, and be the author of salvation to all, who are willing to receive that saying, which is worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

EREUNETES.

STRICTURES ON THE CONFESSION OF A CALVINIST.

“ Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.”—Rom. xiv. 5.

WE have “ the confession of an Opium-eater,” and fifty other “ confessions,” but it is among the “ signs of the times” that we should have “ the confession of a Calvinist,” and that too at the shrine of an Arian.

That error will still be error, is self-evident ; but that educated man should continue in error merely because it is a tenet of a particular sect of which he is a member, appears an anomaly in Protestantism, the very essence of which is the right of free enquiry in matters of Faith. That “ the Bible is the religion of Protestants,” is their uniform cry, yet they persevere in looking at it as we do

at the sun, through smoked glass, and thus give its doctrines a jaundiced hue, instead of fixing the eagle eye of REASON upon revealed RELIGION, with the ardent desire of discovering its glories. They are both the gift of God—neither, therefore, can *by possibility* contradict the other. Reason has been beautifully called “the golden chain, that extends from the throne of God down to man, joining earth with heaven, and heaven with earth;” yet it seems as if the terrors of *Almighty vengeance* were more congenial to the human soul than are the mild precepts of that benignant religion—a religion purely of the heart—which God revealed to mankind, when “in these latter days he spoke to us by his son.”

Experience convinces me that the man who said that “the fear of Hell had a far greater effect on the bulk of mankind than the power of reason,” was right; yet it astonishes me that men who might, from their strength of mind on other subjects, be expected to exercise their reasoning faculties with decision on the subject of religion, should persist in clinging to a *system* in opposition to the clear principles of the Christian Revelation.

The following six “Articles” were lately transmitted to me, as the “Confession of Faith” of “A Calvinist.” They are *deliberately*, and, I have no doubt, *conscientiously*, his opinions, because they were intended to disabuse my mind from the idea, that the doctrine of “exclusive salvation,” imputed to the Romish church, is also held by the Calvinists. The circumstance which called them forth is as follows: I had mentioned to him my having heard a Presbyterian Clergyman declare from the pulpit, that Christ, as the Judge of the world, would punish all those who denied the doctrine of *his Deity*, and he *acquiesced* in the uncharitable denouncement. The Clergyman’s words were—“Then, (*viz.* the day of Judgment,) will he (Christ) explain the *now inexplicable mystery* of his Godhead; then will he *avenge* his insulted *Deity*; then will he punish all those who deny *that Deity*, and his atonement, by passing on them the awful, the irrevocable sentence, ‘Depart from me ye cursed *into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels!*’” I argued that this was as complete an avowal of *Exclusive Salvation* in his sect, as it was possible to charge upon the Romish church, and at length he gave the *saving clause*, that the *mercy of God* MIGHT *be extended* to those

who held the doctrine of the Deity of Christ as anti-scriptural. I confess I felt very little gratitude for the admission ; because I recollected the consolatory doctrine "out of Hell there is no redemption." I gratefully thank God that *he hath not committed the power of Judgment* to any human sectarian, but to the great Being who had Glory with himself before the world was, and whom he hath, in consequence of his *obedience, exalted* to be a PRINCE and a SAVIOUR. That great Being has given us a fine example of humility, and imparted to us, in a series of instructive parables, the finest religious morals in existence ; and he has strongly and pointedly inveighed against all sectarian rigidity, in the public rebukes he gave to the *spiritual pride* of the Pharisees ! Would to God that his professed followers would imbibe from his doctrines the principles of *universal charity*, instead of presuming to wield the thunder of Omnipotence, by "dealing damnation" on all, however conscientious, whose creed does not square with *their* views of Gospel truths. The God whom I worship, whom I adore, is truly a *God of love and not of vengeance*. The "Mediator between God and men," to whom I look forward as the future Judge of the quick and the dead, is the humble and benevolent Jesus, who has declared, not that he will punish for the non-belief of an *inexplicable mystery* ! but that he will *reward every man according to his works*.

The following is the Calvinist's Confession, with my Strictures subjoined :—

CONFESSION.

Article 1.—"I am as certain that there is a God above, as that I myself am here below. My certainty is the same ; for how otherwise did I come here ?"

On Article 1.—It is only "*the fool*" who "saith in his heart there is no God." The belief in a supreme being is universal, and has always been so. True : the doctrine of Polytheism, or the belief in *more than one*, has been a very ancient one, and it strikes me as a curious coincidence between modern and ancient *orthodoxy*, that the former hold, that there are *more than one* PERSON in their Godhead, EACH of which PERSONS is *very and eternal, omnipotent, self-existent, omniscient* GOD ; yet this multiplicity of *persons* forms but ONE GOD ! The latter admitted a multiplicity of GODS, but all subordinate to one SUPREME GOD, or at least to one Head in each of the

Several departments into which the Government of the Godhead, or the Theocracy, was distributed. Unitarians believe the Godhead to be complete in THE FATHER ALONE.

Art. 2.—“I believe that when the Lord ‘looked down from Heaven upon the Children of Men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God,’ the declaration was, ‘they are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy, there is none that doeth good, no, not one.’”

On Art. 2.—This article of the Calvinist’s creed is exactly from the 14th and 52d Psalms, which are nearly *verbatim* the same. Let those, however, who hold this doctrine, read on, and they will find David exclaiming, “Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? *who eat up my people as they eat bread*, and call not upon the Lord. There were they in great fear, where no fear was; for GOD is in the generation of the righteous.” Now was David describing *all the world as Cannibals*? Certainly not; yet that doctrine is as plainly taught as that “all are filthy!” The doctrine inculcated by the Psalmist is, that mankind was in general addicted to wickedness. So in Psalm xi. “The Lord’s throne is in Heaven; his eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men. The Lord trieth the righteous. * * * * * For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness: his countenance doth behold the upright.” Now according to the “Calvinist’s” ideas, the upright Lord had *none* of mankind on whom he could exhibit his love, “for there is none that doeth good, no, not one!” What did Christ mean when he declared that he “came not to call the RIGHTEOUS, but *sinner*s to repentance?” or when he asserted that “there is more rejoicing in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth, *than over ninety and nine just men who need no repentance*?”

Art. 3.—“I believe that to man, who hath thus gone astray, and become filthy, God, at different times, gave a revelation of his will, and that that revelation is contained in the Bible.”

On Art. 3.—I believe with the Calvinist in the revelation of God’s will to mankind, and that this revelation is contained in the Bible.

Art. 4.—“That if Jesus Christ is not *clearly* revealed in a great many parts of the Bible, as the VERY, TRUE, and ETERNAL GOD, I am really and conscientiously unable to know any thing else that is to be understood by the sacred writers, in these parts; and particularly I believe the Apostle Paul does not misrepresent the mind of

God the Father, when he represents him as saying to God the Son
 ‘Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever : a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.’”

On Art. 4.---This is the grand “stumbling-block.” If Christ is *clearly* revealed as the “very and eternal God,” why do Trinitarians admit the *doctrine of his Deity* to be “an *inexplicable mystery*?” I cannot comprehend what is meant by a clearly revealed inexplicable mystery. The fact is, that the best informed Trinitarians do not assert that it is *clearly revealed*, but *only inferentially*. I may add, that the Apostle quotes from the 44th Psalm, 6th & 7th ver. ; and if the “Calvinist” had looked a *very little* farther, he would have found the termination of the sense, and sentence, in the following language,---“Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity, *therefore God, even THY God*, hath anointed *thee* with the oil of gladness *above thy fellows*.” I need scarcely remind the *learned* reader, that instead of “Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever,” the *correct* translation is “God is thy Throne, for ever and ever.”

Art. 5.---“That faith in Jesus Christ is the alone means by which we are to be saved ; and that though we are saved by faith alone it is by that faith which is not alone.”

On Art. 5.---We agree ; because this implies the necessity of good works.

Art. 6.---“That when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels in flaming fire, he will take vengeance on them that *know not* God (a) as well as on them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ ; and that *they* shall be punished with *everlasting* destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.”

On Article 6.—If ignorance render man as liable to the vengeance of God, as disobedience to the Gospel, the world is in a deplorable state !

Ignorance is two-fold---involuntary and wilful. The latter is *positive*, the former *negative* error. But what is the truth, the knowledge of which is so essential to Salvation ? The Calvinist asserts it to be that Jesus Christ is

(a) I think you asserted that it was not to be found in all the bible that any person is to be punished hereafter for ignorance ; now in this passage the *knowledge* of the truth is as necessary to Salvation as obedience to the Gospel, &c. ; or, in other words, ignorance renders the person as liable to the vengeance of God, as disobedience to the Gospel, &c.

"the *very, true, and eternal* God!" I reject this doctrine as not being true. Now *which* of us is in ignorance? It is clear that *both* are not right, but it is *not* clear to *both* our comprehensions which of us it is that is not right. Each of us hath "searched the Scriptures," and each of us is able to adduce Scripture authority for the belief we respectively hold. Is it not then charging the Almighty with gross injustice, to assert, that, when we both conscientiously believe ourselves right, yet when it is clear that one of us *must* be wrong, God will be *vindictive* enough to punish to all eternity, the person who is labouring under an error so conscientiously? To me it is holding out a most unamiable picture of THE GREAT BEING whose hand upholds all nature, to suppose an unintentional, an involuntary error sufficient to render man the object of *God's vengeance*. My reason recoils with horror at the bare supposition.

And yet this very feeling may be error! consequently it follows, because I am ignorant of the exact conduct which God will hold to his creatures, when he shall "judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained," that I must be eternally punished for my want of knowledge.

But St. Paul appears to have put the question at rest. In Rom. xiv. he says, "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations, for one believeth that he may eat all things; another who is weak eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth; yea he shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike.--- Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

Now this is the genuine spirit of Christian charity; here is no sending to everlasting perdition for *opinions*! here is universal liberty of conscience. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

A Roman Catholic layman lately said to me, "It is impossible, but that every man *thinks himself right* in his view of religion, else he would not hold it: If a man *profess* himself of a religion *which he does not believe*, he is a hypocrite; and if he believe *conscientiously*, then he must be right." The Apostle of the Gentiles and my

Roman Catholic friend are of one mind on *this* point, and I have no doubt on many others. But would it be consonant with that charity which Paul commends so strongly, to hold the abominable dogma, that because my friend believes *more* than I *can* do, he must be damned for believing *too much*? or that, because I *cannot* conscientiously believe some doctrines on which he *does* conscientiously place reliance, I must suffer for believing *less* than he does? God forbid that I should ever hold so unscriptural a dogma! "Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand at the judgment seat of Christ * * * * * then every one shall give an account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." (Rom. xiv. 13.)

I have laid it down as an indisputable truth, that Scripture given by inspiration of God, cannot contradict Scripture *also so given*, because both proceed from the same infallible source. Man, however, seems more desirous of worshipping a God who is ever crying out "Vengeance is mine," than that God, whom Jesus described as "a Spirit," and declared that "those who worship Him, must worship him in spirit and in truth;" that great Being, whom John portrayed as the emblem of benevolence, when he wrote, that "God is Love."

I am gratified to think that the "Calvinist" has given up the "*Damning System*," which led to his confession; and that he does not introduce those *peculiar doctrines* of Calvinism, which are much more obnoxious than any mentioned in his creed. I trust that Calvinists are beginning to consider, and that they will in due time surmount the prejudices of an erroneous education, and see the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

I conclude my strictures with the words of St. Paul to the Corinthians. I address them as an Arian to the Calvinist. "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one; for though there be that are called Gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be Gods many and Lords many,) but to us there is but one God the Father * * * and one Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. viii. 4---6.)

A LAYMAN.

OBSERVATIONS
ON AN ESSAY ON THE FORMATION OF OPINIONS.

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1826.*

AMONG the melancholy proofs of religious rancour and persecution, which at present disgrace a portion of the Synod of Ulster, and by which a few agitators of that Rev. Body, have imposed upon their brethren theological dogmas, alike destructive of Christian liberty, and free inquiry into the truths of Christianity; it is some consolation to reflect, that they have only partially impeded the progress of human intellect; and that in other quarters, the principles of the philosophy of the mind have been delineated with a masterly hand, and the true and genuine principles by which opinions should be formed have been investigated in such a manner as to command the assent and approbation of every sincere inquirer after truth. The progress of truth may be retarded for a time, by the imposition of human commandments in place of the pure word of God; the passions of men may be excited by working upon the prejudices of the ignorant and unreflecting multitude; but the spirit of the times is decidedly unfavourable to the narrow views and selfish interests of a Faction. The generality of mankind are not interested in supporting established errors. They are duped by the frauds of crafty Pharisaical professors, who, taking advantage of their ignorance, endeavour to establish themselves in the chair of infallibility, and to erect themselves into lordly dictators over the consciences of their brethren. Prejudices may for a time obscure the understanding, and bad passions prevent the judgment; but the day spring of knowledge which has arisen upon these lands, and the spirit of inquiry which is abroad, will dissipate the mists of error and prejudice. The axe is now laid to the root of the tree. Men will look for something more than lofty *pretensions* to piety, and *assumptions* of inward illumination. They will require to witness the *fruits* of Christianity in some other way, than in the persecution of their unoffending brethren.

In the work before us, the author has, in the most luminous and convincing manner, proved that *belief* and

doubt, and *disbelief*, are involuntary states of the intellect, and that they are severally induced by the nature of the evidence brought in support of any proposition. He has shown that belief is not voluntary or depending on the will, when the nature of the evidence is such as to produce assent; and that a state of doubt is no more subject to the will than any other state of the mind: and, consequently, as these states of mind are not dependant on our volitions, they are neither praise, nor blameworthy. In accounting for the error of regarding belief as a voluntary act of the mind, the author observes:

“It is important to remark, that it may have arisen, in some degree, from the circumstance of many people having no real conception of the truth or falsehood of those opinions which they profess. They adopt an opinion according to their interest or their passions; or, in other words, they undertake to assert some particular doctrine, and regard as adversaries all who oppose it. Without any reference to its import, they look upon it as a thing to be *maintained*, a post *to be defended*. In this sense, and with such people, opinions may be said to be voluntary, and being mere professions, forming a sort of party badge, and having no dependance on the understanding, they may be assumed and discarded at pleasure.”

“It may perhaps be asserted with truth, that in regard to some subjects or other, all mankind are in this predicament; and opinions thus taken up are often maintained with more violence than such as are founded on the most thorough conviction. They are maintained, not for the *sake of Truth*, nor from the desire natural to man, of impressing upon others what he sincerely believes, but for the sake of that interest, or the gratification of that passion, on account of which they were originally adopted. By thus defending opinions of which they have no clear conviction, people often succeed in imposing on themselves, as well as on others. Paradoxical as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that they are not always aware of the exact state of their own minds; they frequently imagine themselves to believe more than they are actually convinced of. On many questions they are not able to form any definite decision, and yet, from the necessity of professing some opinions, or joining some party, and from the habit of making assertions, and even arguing

in favour of what they are thus pledged to support, they come to regard themselves as entertaining positive sentiments on points about which they are really in doubt."

After satisfactorily solving this apparent paradox, our author proceeds to show, that belief, though involuntary, may, nevertheless, be induced, by a *partial* examination of a subject, neglecting the arguments on *one* side, and leaning to the other. Diversity of opinions among mankind are shown to proceed from affixing different ideas to the same words; and not only the arguments which we read or hear, but also the various suggestions to which they give rise, occasion this diversity. The unequal powers of conception and discrimination, the previous ideas, associations, and prejudices, modify the combinations of thought, suggested by any set of arguments; as the reading of the same political essay by a Whig and Tory, or, the perusal of the same theological treatise by an Italian monk, and an English dissenter, would suggest very different ideas.

In speaking of rewards and punishments, as means of coercion in establishing, or eradicating opinions, the Author remarks, "The allurements and menaces of power may draw hypocritical professions from avarice or ambition, or extort verbal renunciations from fear and feebleness; but this is all they can accomplish. The way to alter belief is not to address motives to the will, but arguments to the intellect. To apply rewards and punishments to opinions, is as absurd as to raise men to the peerage for their ruddy complexions, to whip them for the gout, and hang them for the scrofula."

Were we to transcribe every striking passage, we might copy the whole of this important and excellent essay. We could wish that it were more generally known and perused in this country; and hope that this slight notice of it will have the effect of giving it a wider circulation. The essays which accompany it are equally worthy of attention, particularly that on the publication of opinions. We shall probably take some other opportunity of directing the attention of the public to other works of the same author. Our limits will not permit our entering into the merits of this Essay as we could wish, and we fear we have already exceeded the bounds which the press of other matter will allow us to afford; but we cannot suppress the inclination we feel to

give the following extracts from the last section of this essay :—

“ Few speculative errors appear to have produced evil consequences, so many and so extensive, as the notion that ‘ *belief, doubt, and disbelief,*’ are voluntary acts, involving moral merit and demerit. One of its most obvious effects has been, to draw mankind from an attention to moral conduct, and lead them to regard the *belief* of certain tenets as far more deserving of approbation, than a course of the most consistent virtue. Where such a doctrine prevails, where opinions are considered of paramount importance to actions, it is no wonder if the ties of morality are loosened. The error under consideration has produced much secret musing, by loading the minds of the timid and conscientious with the imaginary guilt of holding opinions which they regarded with horror, while they could not avoid them. What is still worse, it has frequently alarmed the inquirer into an abandonment of the pursuit of truth. Under a confused supposition of criminality in the belief of particular doctrines, men have, with reason, been deterred from examining evidence, lest it should irresistibly lead them to views which it might be culpable to entertain. If it is really true, indeed, that the least deviation from a given line of opinion will be attended with guilt, the only safe course is to exclude all examination, to shun every research which might, by possibility, terminate in any such result. When it is already fixed and determined, that an investigation must end in a prescribed way, otherwise the inquirer will be involved in criminality ; all inquiry becomes not only useless but foolish. This apprehension of the consequences of research once extended even to Natural Philosophy, and there is little doubt that it may be justly charged by moral science with much of the slowness of its progress. If the former has long since emancipated itself from this error, the latter still confessedly labours under its oppression. The intellect is still intimidated into a desertion of every track which appears to lead to conclusions at variance with the prescribed modes of thinking.”

“ Men grow pale

Lest their own judgments should become too bright,

And their free thoughts be crimes; and earth have too much light.”

“ It is probable that the same error, with regard to the nature of belief, has been one principal cause of requiring subscriptions or other outward manifestations of assent, to a long list of abstruse, complex, and often unintelligible doctrines, in order to qualify the aspirant not only for ecclesiastical, but even for military offices. On no other hypotheses, at least, could the practice be justified of making the profession of certain opinions the indispensable preliminary to personal exaltation, the stepping-stone to fortune and to power.”

“ But the most fatal consequences of the speculative error under consideration, are to be found in the repeated attempts to regulate men’s creeds by the application of intimidation and punishment ; and in the intolerance and persecution which have disgraced the history of the human race. The natural consequence of imputing guilt to opinions, was an endeavour to prevent and punish them ; and as such a course coincided with the gratification of the malignant

passions of our nature, nothing less could be expected than that it would be pursued with eagerness and marked by cruelty."

"We shall find that the aim of the persecutor has been, not only to prevent obnoxious opinions from spreading, but to punish the presumed guilt of holding them, and sometimes to convert the sufferers. He has accordingly directed his fancy against actions, merely expressive or indicative of opinions, and having no tendency to propagate them, and has relented when his victims have been brought to *profess* a renunciation of their errors; his conduct evidently proceeding on the two assumptions, that belief was voluntary, so that a man might be induced or compelled to relinquish it; and secondly, that if it differed from his own it was criminal, and, therefore, deserved to be punished."—Page 81.

"As we partly seek for the concurrence of others, on account of the corroboration which it affords of the truth of our own sentiments, it is observable, that those men are in general the least hurt at opposition, who, having a clear discernment of the foundation of their tenets, least require the support of other people's approbation; and that prejudiced and ignorant men, of narrow views and confused notions, always display the most inveterate intolerance. While men zealously maintain what they neither clearly comprehend nor entirely believe, they are shaken in their imagined faith by the opposite persuasion, or even doubts of other men; and vent on their antagonists that impatience, which is the natural result of so disagreeable a state of the understanding. The state of doubt is, indeed, a state of trouble, to which every one will be averse, in proportion as he is unaccustomed to intellectual exertion and candid inquiry. Hence, whoever takes his opinions upon *trust*, has a thorough repugnance to be disturbed by contrary arguments."

"But the mortification arising from controversy, and the uneasiness of doubt, are comparatively transient and irregular motives of persecution. We may find more fixed and steady sources of intolerance in the connexion often subsisting between men's permanent interests, or favourite objects, and the maintenance of certain doctrines. Those persons are peculiarly rancorous against dissent and opposition, who have assumed an opinion, probably without comprehending it, and without the least concern about the truth, from selfish and mercenary views. When the emolument, power, pride, personal consequence, or gratification of any one becomes identified with a doctrine, or system, he is impatient and resentful at the slightest doubt; because every doubt is of the nature of a personal attack, and threatens danger to the objects of his regard. It is this identification of personal interests with systems of opinions, which has in all ages been one of the greatest sources of intolerance on the part of the priesthood. It is this which has led them to represent, with so much zeal, a departure from these dogmas, as one of the worst of crimes, and often caused them to pursue, with remorseless cruelty, all aberrations from that creed on which their power and importance depended."—Page 90.

"If the practices of the world receive any amelioration from its advancement in knowledge; if the one keep pace with the other, we

may rationally expect to see a diminution of intolerance, in so far as it is founded in ignorance and error. The fundamental error of imputing guilt to a man on account of his opinions, has shrunk within narrow bounds; but it is nevertheless far from being exterminated. Men have extended their sphere of liberality,—they have expanded their system of toleration, but it is not yet without limits. There is still a boundary in speculation, beyond which no one is allowed to proceed, at which innocence terminates, and guilt commences;—a boundary not fixed and determinate, but varying with the creed of every party.”—Page 92.

This eloquent and interesting writer concludes by showing, that, though the advancement of civilization has disarmed the persecutor of torture and death, there is an analogous, though less barbarous persecution of those who depart from the orthodox doctrine—private antipathy, public odium, reproach and invective; and that their opinions are looked upon with as much horror (he might have added more,) as the most flagrant breach of morality. That praise and honour await the man who has taken his opinions upon trust, without examination; while obloquy and reproach follow him who has carefully examined the subject, and been led to an opposite conclusion; and expresses his disgust at the spectacle of a mob, whether learned or illiterate, who, without scrutinizing the foundation of their opinions, assail with contumely the man, who, after patient labour, research, and reflection, has adopted different sentiments from theirs, and plume themselves on their superior virtue, because their understandings have been tenacious of prejudice.

To The Bible Christian.

GENEVA †

SIR—I have just now been reading a Paper, published this day, with an ominous signature. When a writer on a Religious subject chooses *Ehud* for his *nom de guerre*, I am equally at a loss about his own character and the nature of his subject. It gave me a strange idea of both, that the author should adopt the name of a left-handed assassin, who stabbed a king, under pretence of delivering a message from God. (Judges iii.) It indicated an extraordinary perversion of the moral faculty;

† See Mr. Armstrong's Letter, February, p. 78.

and led me to expect something portentous in his object. After all, there was nothing in the paper, but a misconception of two French phrases.

From the first (*chez nous*) he concludes, that M. Chenevière, the Rector of the Academy of Geneva, and Professor of Theology, and the Company of Pastors of that renowned city, were guilty of the extravagant absurdity of transmitting to Ireland a solemn and formal disclaimer of having ever joined a mob in crying, "Down with Jesus:" *Jamais on n'a crié chez nous; Abas Jesus Christ.* He has hardly established this point to his own satisfaction, when he acknowledges, that no such charge had been made; "for this gentleman (Mr. Brown) did not say, that the Clergy had uttered the above infidel cry; but that the mob had uttered it." He confesses, that no one could suspect them of such a blasphemous outrage; that no one ever charged them with it; and yet asserts, that they condescended to vindicate themselves from what had never been imputed to them. All this he grounds upon the words (*chez nous*) *among us*. In the very next sentence, he grants, however, that these words "may be understood of the whole Genevese community." To reconcile him to this reluctant concession, I shall help him to the highest authority in the French tongue: "Il signifie aussi Parmi: *Il y avoit une coutume chez les Athéniens, chez les Grecs, &c.*" Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française.

As to the word, *polemically*, or *in a polemical manner*, (*polemiquement*), which he chooses to interpret *argumentatively*, I shall furnish him with the two best authorities, English and French. Johnson interprets *Polemical*, by *Controversial*; *Disputative*; and gives an example from Addison, which I quote, for the benefit of our fair controversialists: "The best method to be used with these *polemical* ladies is, to show them the ridiculous side of their cause." The French Academy explains *Polemique*, by *Qui appartient à la dispute*. I suppose, Elud knows, that both of these are mitigated significations; and that the word originally meant *Warlike*, or *Hostile*.

The latter clause in the extract from M. Chenevière's letter, in which this word occurs, has a reference to a regulation made above 120 years ago, when Geneva was thrown into confusion by Religious Controversy; as, I

apprehend, it has been of late. The Pastors in Geneva, and many other Continental cities, though they preside over districts or parishes, seldom preach in their own churches, but in rotation round the town. In controversial times, this practice must give rise to frequent collisions, contradictions, and personal altercations; and strange Pastors may sometimes wantonly, and at other times from a sense of duty, endeavour to sow discord between the *Pastor Loci* and his flock. This position I may be excused from proving *at present*. Suppose this practice to be common, and the city would become disorderly. In such a state of affairs, the Council of 200 discouraged preaching on controverted doctrines, as was done in England, under Laud. This rule appears now to be modified. Preachers are allowed to inculcate their favourite doctrines without restraint, and actually do so, provided that they argue them straight forward (directement) and do not make them subjects of controversy, and wage war against the brethren. (polemiquement.) These were considered as Pacific Acts. The Magistrate may think it essential to the peace of the community, to prevent pulpits from becoming stages for polemical champions to rail at each other, and disturb the harmony of congregations and society; but no friend of Religious Liberty will defend them.

The idea, that the whole corps of Divines, consisting, I believe, of 25 Pastors, agreed to contrive this paltry equivocation, betrays the meanness of the mind in which it originated. When we consider, that a diversity of opinion on Religion exists among them, such a notion must appear to be downright folly. It would be more agreeable to our daily experience to suspect, that the story is a pious fraud, which found too easy assent in the orthodox credulity of Mr. Brown: and that the Pastors of every party rejected such an infamous slander on their fellow-citizens. Suppose it true: who can be answerable for the exclamation of an impious profligate, in the middle of a mob? Would any one be so absurd or illiberal as to charge the Church of England with the infidelity of Taylor though in Episcopal Orders?

The flourish of trumpets with which Ehud and his Trumpeter celebrate their Victory is truly laughable.

Farewell,

Belfast, Thursday, March 18.

ERASMUS.

THE "ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN" ON 1 CGR. XV. 24.

To the Editor of The Bible Christian.

SIR,

I was anxious to see the promised criticism upon this passage. Several circumstances contributed to produce this state of mind. A request came from Cookstown that the passage should be explained—a promise was given last month, in order to excite the public curiosity—a sermon had been preached also, at convenient request, in this town, after due notice, raising the expectation of a total overthrow of the whole Arian system—and the essence of this sermon was expected to be transfused into the pages of the "Orthodox Presbyterian." I was not a little anxious for another reason—that though I was an Arian on conviction, from most diligent, and I trust humble search of God's word, and use of all the means in my power, I was prepared at all hazards to yield to the force of truth, and to abandon this powerful and explicit passage of Scripture, never again to produce it in support of our cause. I have read the commentary with great care—but to understand it, is beyond my capacity. I have therefore abandoned all idea of criticizing it. The very exordium contains the most extraordinary assertion that I have seen made by any that do not wish to promote infidelity; and although I believe and know that the extravagant opinions of those called Orthodox, are swelling the ranks of infidels, I do not believe such to be their intention. The article begins with the assertion, that the *difficulties* of Scripture "rather afford an evidence that the Bible is from God." Now, if this be true, the *greater* the difficulties, the stronger is the proof of Divine origin. This then would prove most satisfactorily, that Atheism is of Divine origin; because *it* is attended with insuperable difficulties, which a belief in the existence of God removes: Thus the "Orthodox Presbyterian" has brought us to this wonderful conclusion, that Atheism is of Divine origin, and the knowledge of God is not.

I will in charity endeavour to remove this confusion of intellect. Difficulties can afford no *proof* in favour of

any system; but must always be considered as objections, which we may expect to find in all subjects of knowledge, presented to man in his present state of being. The importance of the difficulties will depend upon the strength of the positive evidence. If that be clear and strong, very weighty objections indeed will be required, in order to prevail against it. If, then, in any system we have a mass of positive evidence, preponderating over all difficulties; we have sufficient reason to think that we are in the road of truth. This is precisely the case with the Arian doctrine. Arians deny not the existence of difficulties. They know that there is much more in the spiritual world that must remain unexplained, than has ever been revealed;—but they rely on the Scriptural evidence of Arianism being much greater in amount, more explicit in its nature, and more generally diffused throughout the Bible, than the evidence of any other system. They have also been in the habit of considering, that if the positive evidence be equal; the fewer the difficulties, the greater the probability of the system being true; but the “Orthodox Presbyterian” teaches, that, in such a case, the triumph will be on that side on which the difficulties can neither be numbered nor overcome.

I have declined criticizing this commentary, because I cannot comprehend one sentence in it; and if difficulties be a proof of superiority of origin, this has most undeniable claims. The 21st verse is to be explained without any reference to the 27th, and presently the 27th is compared with it to show its meaning. The word *kingdom* is called a *phrase*, and its meaning is to be investigated, but its senses are not to be followed out. Dan. vii. 14. * is quoted to prove that Christ’s kingdom shall never be destroyed, in opposition to the assertion that it shall be delivered up; and as all difficulties are in favour of our commentator, it would be a pity to clear up this; by showing that there is a difference between a “kingdom being destroyed” by opposing violence, and a “dominion passing away” like human dominions, and the entrusted kingdom being “delivered up” when the end is accomplished.

* “And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”

Again, though the kingdom mentioned in Daniel is the kingdom "*given*" to Christ, it is not the one to be delivered up; but he is to deliver up the Church, or rather he is represented in this article as handing over every "*regenerate child*" into the Father's hands, and continuing to do so until the whole Church is saved, and of course there is to be no general judgment. The writer says, that the chief difficulty of the passage arises from *defective quotation*. To obviate this, I will quote the passage entire—and as I can attach no meaning to this comment, I shall venture upon one of my own.

1 Cor. xv. 20.—“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.—(21.) For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.—(22.) For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.—(23.) But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits; afterwards, they that are Christ's at his coming.—(24.) Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power.—(25.) For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.—(26.) The last enemy which shall be destroyed is death.—(27.) For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted that did put all things under him.—(28.) And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”

I have promised a comment upon this passage, but it is so clear in itself, that it cannot be made plainer. The 20th verse states the resurrection of our Lord; the 21st and 22d assign a reason for this, and contrast the coming of death upon *all* by Adam, with the coming of life upon *all* by Jesus Christ. The 23d verse repeats that Christ is the first fruits, and states that they who are Christ's will be made alive at his coming. The 24th verse informs us that this will be the end of all things; when Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to his God, even the Father, after having put down all rule, authority, and power, and destroyed death, the last enemy, until which time his reign was to continue. In the 27th verse, the Apostle quotes Psalm viii. 6, “Thou hast put all things under his feet,” and informs us that this “all” must be qualified in its meaning so as to except the *Giver* of the Son's dominion; and the 28th verse brings us to the grand and glorious consummation of all, that

after these great ends shall be accomplished, the Mediatorial kingdom will be delivered up—the Son be no longer *king*, but *subject* to the Father; that God may be all in all: when, as the Apostle John says, “the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.”

It is obvious from the whole context, that, whoever the Christ was that was raised from the dead by God, he was sufficient to give life; to subdue all things; to destroy death and all other enemies; and conduct the Spiritual kingdom of the Messiah to the glorious termination that is here mentioned. Now, if only the creature (or human nature of Christ,) as the Calvinists say, died; then the human nature, or the man Christ Jesus, alone is sufficient for all these glorious purposes, and the necessity for an Almighty, self-existent Being, to fulfil this office, falls to the ground; or if it be true, as the Calvinists also maintain, that nothing less than an Omnipotent, Infinite, Eternal Being can save, then it follows that this Omnipotent, Infinite, Eternal Being died: for this is indubitable, that the same Christ that *died*, became, after his resurrection, the *Great King* that is to save us.

EREUNETES.

SYNODICAL OVERTURES.

WHETHER the schism which has lately taken place in the Synod of Ulster, will be ultimately favourable, or unfavourable to the interests of pure and undefiled religion, is a point on which I express no opinion. Let the consequences of that event be what they may, its immediate cause is to be found in the Overtures enacted at Cookstown, in 1828. Those Overtures have been so often, and so amply discussed, that little can now be said on them which will not be deemed trite by many readers. There may, however, be some who have not, hitherto, been much interested by Synodical transactions, to whom a few remarks on regulations, which have been the means of rendering in twain the goodly fabric of our Church, may not be unacceptable.

Let us, in the first place, examine the soundness of the principle on which the Overtures are constructed. They are evidently grounded on the presumption, that every religious community has a right to determine the qualifications which its members, or persons desirous of becoming members, must possess; and to receive, reject, or expel, according to the standard thus established. This position

seems, at first view, to be stable, but it rests on a sandy foundation. It is a daring and unwarranted encroachment on the prerogative of *Him* "who has been made head over all things to the Church." In ascertaining the individuals to whom the right hand of fellowship is to be given, or from whom it is to be withheld, we must be guided solely and exclusively by the rules laid down in the Gospel. The Communion of Christians is to be regulated, not by human enactments, but by the directions of the great Author of our faith. Not by the arbitrary decrees of Councils, Convocations, or Synods, but by the precepts and the practice of our Lord Jesus Christ, and his inspired Apostles. Whatever may be the principle on which other Churches are formed, the foundation stone of ours is, that the "Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the *only* rule of Faith and obedience; and that no man, or body of men, have authority in matters of faith." We acknowledge no human head:—Christ, and Christ only, is our King:—the Bible, and the Bible only, is our creed. Of all ecclesiastical communities, the Presbyterian Church can, with least consistency, presume to make any other laws for the management of its concerns, than those which are to be found in the Gospel. Its constitution is strictly spiritual: it has no right to exercise powers similar to those vested in civil societies. The majority of its members are not empowered to frame new regulations, according to the dictates of their own discretion, and exclude from Communion all persons who refuse to submit to those unscriptural impositions. For weak and feeble men to require terms of admission to Christian fellowship, which have not been required by *Him* whom they *call* their supreme lawgiver, is an act of unholy usurpation. Here, then, we have a standard, by which we may at once determine the point at issue. The criterion is simply this:—What is the declaration of faith required in the New Testament, from persons desirous of entering into the Christian Church? Beyond this declaration, and the tenets which it necessarily implies, we have no authority whatever for imposing a single condition. Now if we look into the word of truth, we shall find that the terms of admission to Communion were extremely simple. No reference whatever to the Trinity, Original sin, or any one of the doctrines stated in the Overtures. That Jesus Christ is the Son of God, was the only confession required by Philip from the Eunuch. Believe said Paul and Silas, unto the keeper of the prison at Philippi, "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." True, says the compiler of creeds; but what are we to understand by believing in Christ? The Scriptures have given an explicit answer to the question. When Martha was called on to declare her faith respecting our Saviour, what was her reply? "Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world." To a similar requisition, Simon Peter returned a similar answer, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." In various other passages of Scripture, the epithets, "Son of God," and "the Christ," or "Messias," are evidently used as synonymous. We are told "that every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God." Again, "whosoever shall confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."

A sincere profession of belief in Jesus as the Messiah, of reliance on him as a Saviour, and of obedience to him as a teacher sent from God, seems, therefore, to have been the only qualification required by himself, or his immediate followers, for admission to all the privileges and blessings of the Christian Church. Under this profession, must, of course, be included certain fundamental and universally received articles of faith: Such as a firm persuasion of the existence, the providence, and perfections of the Supreme Being; the responsibility and immortality of man, and the final acceptance of penitent sinners through the infinite mercy of God in Jesus Christ. The acknowledgment of Christ as a messenger of mercy sent into the world by the One God and Father of All, necessarily implies an acknowledgment of that God and Father from whom he received his commission.

These doctrines, and others of primary importance, Unitarians, or believers in one God, do most firmly entertain; and what more should be required? The faith of such men would have procured for them communion with Christ and his Apostles, though it is not now sufficiently comprehensive to render them worthy of communion with the immaculate members of the Synod of Ulster. But it would seem that Christ and his Apostles were latitudinarians in discipline. They made the door of admission into the temple far too wide. In the earliest and purest days of the Church, the Creed, which is commonly called the Apostles', was framed as a compendium of the Christian Faith. This has frequently been called the Unitarian formula—because in all its principal articles Unitarians do most heartily concur. In vain will you search in this most ancient of all human creeds, for such an expression as “There are three persons in the Godhead, &c.,” or for any of the other dogmas propounded in the Overtures. Be it observed, however, that I am not now impugning those dogmas. All I maintain is, that there is no Scriptural authority for making them door-keepers in the house of God. They may be true, or they may be false, but they ought not to be imposed as terms of communion. If, from the beginning of Matthew to the end of Revelation, a single passage can be found requiring belief in the Trinity, Original Sin, &c. &c. as a necessary passport for entry into the Church—let that passage be produced.

“But,” said one of the supporters of the recent Synodical measures, “where shall we stop? shall we admit all professing Christians, Socinians, Catholics, &c?” I answer in the words of another member, “we ought to stop exactly where our sacred guide stops. By advancing a single step farther, we involve ourselves in the mazes of conjecture and perplexity.”

I would retort the interrogative argument on him who advanced it. I would say to him,—where will your principle of arbitrary exclusion allow you to stop? The bigot considers belief in the minutest tenet of his own system, as absolutely essential; and will tell you, that his conscience will not allow him to remain in fellowship with persons by whom it is denied. The propounder of this question submitted to the Cookstown meeting a certain standard of faith, by which candi-

dates for the Ministry were to be measured; and whoever came up to it, he was willing to admit. This standard, however, was not raised high enough for the Orthodox conscience of another, and *he* introduced the doctrine of *imputed guilt* as an additional qualification. A more Orthodox old gentleman than either, will not be satisfied without a requisition of concurrence in the doctrine of *election*—one member insists on a profession of belief in *irresistible grace*—another contends for the *perseverance* of the *saints*, and the inevitable damnation of all heathens, “be they ever so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature.” Thus, according to the principles acted on in the Overtures, division may go on, till each Minister of the Synod shall be *the head of a distinct Church*. It is well that the great Gamaliel of the Synagogue did not happen to recommend the adoption of the celebrated declaration made by a man like unto himself—“The floor of hell is paved with the skulls of infants not more than a span long.” From the timid and time-serving spirit of the Synod, the recommendation would probably have been adopted.

SIGMA.

 TO BE CONTINUED.

Intelligence.

We have received very interesting intelligence from Dublin, but cannot give it room in our present number; it shall, however, receive due attention.

Correspondents.

We fear that some of our Correspondents will be disappointed this month, at not seeing their communications in the present number. The truth is, that we had marked several for insertion, but, in the mean time, articles were presented which *demand*ed our immediate attention. We rely on the good feeling of our numerous friends, and assure them that we are grateful for their favours, and that they may depend on every attention in our power.

“The account of the Lost Records of the Old Presbytery of Bangor, with Extracts,” in our next.

Communications, free of expense, to be forwarded to the Editors, care of Mr. SAMUEL ARCHER, Bookseller, High-street, BELFAST; who will likewise receive *Subscriptions* for the Work, and who will have *Advertisements* inserted on the cover on the following moderate terms:—a few lines, 4s.—half a page, 6s.—and a whole page, 8s.

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VOL. I.

SYNODICAL OVERTURES.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 156.)

OF all the incongruities exhibited by that most incongruous animal called Man, few are more glaring than one which may not infrequently be observed in the conduct of certain Theologians. The persons to whom I refer, are accustomed to bewail, in terms of the most abject self-abasement, the blindness of their own minds, and the deceitfulness of their own hearts:—they seem to feel a kind of penitential pride, in confessing before God that they are weak, and erring, and worthless creatures of the dust—and no sooner have they made those humble-mouthed acknowledgments, than they will seat themselves composedly in the chair of Infallibility, and pronounce, without hesitation or qualification, that all who do not think exactly as they think on some uncontroverted points of Divinity, are reprobates, for whom man is to feel no charity, and to whom the Almighty will show no mercy. In minds of a stern philosophical cast, such a combination of affected humility, real arrogance, and inconsistency, provokes scorn:—in minds of milder temperament, it calls forth compassion.

A Minister, generally allowed to be one of the most liberal Calvinists in the Synod of Ulster, at one of the meetings of that Reverend Association, allowed the following sentiment to escape from his lips---“I will not say that those who deny the essential deity of the Son of God cannot be saved—for this is not my prerogative—but I do say, that I cannot see how I could be saved, did I hold their views.” Amazing modesty!! Who can remain unmoved by such condescension? Who can be surprised that he be proud of his humility? Our admiration must be raised to a still

higher pitch, when we regard the above quoted sentiment as emanating from one, who, at rather an advanced period of life, was himself led "*to entertain considerable doubt respecting the Divinity of our Lord.*"* The tenderness of his heart gushes forth in despite of his zeal.—

* In the preface to one of this Gentleman's Sermons he says—"that his first impressions were in favour of the Divinity of Christ, but, that, if a *change* of religious views be meritorious, he may, on that ground, lay claim to some merit; for that he was at one time in considerable doubt respecting the Divinity of our Lord." In consequence of a misunderstanding which afterwards arose respecting the date and duration of his apostacy, he deemed it necessary to state in the public Newspapers, that it was not in 1825, but whilst he was Moderator of the Synod, that he had strayed from the way of truth. Thus it appears that when the Rev. Gentleman was raised in rank, he became low in orthodoxy. In him, ecclesiastical pre-eminence and Arian principles were strangely co-existent—this office and his infidelity were simultaneously assumed, and simultaneously relinquished. But what I now have to state is, that about the middle of the very year, which he has thus marked out as the season of his doubts and disbelief, he professed, distinctly and deliberately professed, unshaken adherence to the Calvinistic opinions of his youth—his Moderatorship continued from June, 1816, till June, 1817. Within the compass of those two periods he became a candidate for the Divinity Chair. Rumours of his defection from the banners of Orthodoxy had, by some means or other, gone abroad; and were likely to operate against the success of his applications. In order to counteract the injurious tendency of these rumours, he addressed to several Calvinistic Ministers, whose support he wished to obtain, a circular letter, in which he declared he had never seen cause to change the religious opinions formed by him in early life. For the *precise words* I will not vouch—for the *purport* of them I do. The letter I saw and read; and I am ready, if required, to mention the time, the place, and the names of some Orthodox brethren who were present. The case is simply this: He has latterly affirmed, that, during the year he presided over the Synod, his faith was under an eclipse; and I affirm, that whilst that year was actually revolving, his faith was described by himself as continuing to shine with undiminished splendour. From the juxta-position of his own two statements, it would appear, that his belief was sound and unsound at the same period of time. This seeming contradiction he will, no doubt, be able to explain—just as he explained a former one, with regard to the era of his unlucky aberration from the faith. It is a pity, however, that the old Printing-press story about the transposition of paragraphs, and the consequent derangement of types, will not suit the present exigency. Some explanation he is called on to afford—yet, without pretending to supernatural knowledge, I do hereby prophesy, that the great preacher of the Millenium will maintain, on the present occasion, a dignified silence. Will he be so conde-

Though constrained by a sense of duty to consign all Unitarians to the custody of Satan and his angels; yet he couches the sentence of condemnation in terms so delicately periphrastic, that the culprits must have lost all relish for the *suavitor in modo*, if they are not touched by the mild and compassionate demeanour of their judge. He does not appal them by putting on the black cap—No---he spares their feelings, whilst he —— their souls. His mercy is akin to that formerly exhibited by the humane members of the holy inquisition. They first breathed a valedictory prayer for the spiritual well being of the obstinate heretic, and then feelingly committed the burning of his body to the constituted authorities of the realm. Our Synodical “doomster,” reminds me forcibly of the aged Abbot of Lindisfairne “raising his sightless balls to heaven” and announcing to the wretched Constance and her associate in crime, the horrible fate to which they were devoted—

“Sister—let thy sorrows cease;
Sinful brother, part in peace.”

But I correct myself. The subject ill accords with pleasantries. “The loathsome prostitute,” says Mr. Carson, of Tobermore, “the loathsome prostitute, rotting in some cell in Dublin, or polluting a ward in an hospital, is an angel of light, when compared to the learned, the ingenious, the virtuous Doctor Drummond.” “I do most solemnly declare,” continues this Minister of mercy, who has been characterized by a Calvinist Divine, ‘as one of the first men that ever lived in any church,’—“I do most solemnly declare, that I would rather meet my God as Thurtell the murderer, than as Dr. Priestly, the amiable champion of Socinianism.”

“I believe,” says another modern divine, “that the man who holds not the divinity of Christ, is in fatal error. If he continue in that error, I believe that he must perish.” Such uncharitableness is frightful, and has been the source of all these abominable animosities,

scending as to inform the public, through his own theological Gazette, what kind of doctrines he inculcated from the pulpit or in private, during the time of his backsliding. I should like to hear from his respectable Elders, whether *they* were able to perceive in his sermons or in his conversation, any symptoms of the change which had unfortunately taken place in his principles.

contentions, and persecutions, which are a disgrace to the Christian name. How heart-searing must be that caustic creed, which would impel men, not in other respects unamiable, to express sentiments so harsh—so wicked! Such persons may talk of their kindly affection toward those who differ from them in sentiment; but is it possible that they can be kindly affectioned towards wretches, whom they regard as objects of abhorrence.

These remarks may appear foreign to the subject, but they are not foreign to my object: I draw on the confidence of the reader, and wish him to believe, that I never digress, without having a purpose to serve.

The uncharitableness, of which some specimens have now been exhibited, originates in that overweening assurance of the correctness of their own opinions, which persons of weak understanding and scanty information are prone to entertain. “I am as certain,” said one of our Synodical sons of thunder, on a late public occasion, “I am just as certain that the doctrine of the Trinity is true, as I am of my own existence.” Similar declarations were made by many other “inland divines.” Individuals capable of dogmatizing in this way, seem never to have heard, that presumption is usually the offspring of ignorance—a remark as well founded as it is common: “Fools will rush where Angels fear to tread.” In all controversial discussions, the party who deals most in positive and unqualified assertion, is generally the party most in the wrong. A wise man is distrustful of his own judgment—the blockhead is always confident.

Well would it be for the interests of Christian peace in this quarter of the kingdom, if those Ministers who regard as unpardonable the slightest doubt respecting any article of the creed which they happened to be taught in their boyhood, would learn from the good old Richard Baxter, a lesson of modesty and humble mindedness: “I am not so foolish,” says this pious and amiable man, “as to pretend my certainty to be greater than it is, merely because it may by some be held a dishonour to be less certain; nor will I, by false shame, be kept from confessing those infirmities of which they who hypocritically reproach me with them, have as much as I * * * My certainty of the Christian faith, in its essentials, is

greater than my certainty of the infallibility of *all* the Holy Scriptures. My certainty of this, is greater than my certainty respecting the meaning of several particular texts—and so, with regard to the truth of many doctrines, and the canonicalness of some books. So that, you see, by what gradations my understanding doth proceed, so that my certainty differeth, as the evidence differs.”

This truly evangelical passage I have found it necessary to curtail; but the entire is well worth the attention of all dogmatical polemics. “Let them read, learn, and inwardly digest.”

Since it cannot be denied that there are different degrees of credibility, is it not a duty incumbent on us, as fallible creatures, to proportion our confidence in the truth, and our zeal for the propagation of each particular article of religious belief, to the degree of Scriptural testimony by which it is sustained? This is a position which will hardly be disputed. I would farther observe, that those articles of belief, which have been distinctly and explicitly revealed, are embraced by Christians of every denomination. For instance, all Christians believe, that the Son is subordinate to the Father—a fact so unequivocally stated in the Gospel, that it is admitted even by Trinitarians, though they endeavour to evade the obvious conclusion from the acknowledgment thus extorted, by fabricating an hypothesis concerning a duplication of character in Christ—by asserting boldly, that though only one person, he was at the same time both God and man, in two distinct natures—an ingenious combination, not once mentioned, or even insinuated in the New Testament. All Christians believe, in the resurrection of the body—the immortality of the soul—a retributive state of existence, &c. &c. These, and other tenets revealed with the same perspicuity, and received with the same unanimity, may be regarded as fundamental doctrines of the Gospel; and were ecclesiastical jurisdiction to be at all recognized in matters of faith, I see no reason why they might not be required as terms of communion.

Articles of belief, which it has been found impracticable to express in the *words* of the Bible, cannot justly be represented as declared in the Bible. Should this self-evident proposition be denied, let the advocate of

such articles propound them to *us*, in the language in which they have been propounded by Christ, and his evangelists. This is a test, as easy as it is decisive. Admitting for a moment, that the doctrines alluded to have been gathered from Scripture with every appearance of fairness and correctness, and of course that they may in reality be well founded; still they cannot be classed amongst those which “are built on the foundation of the Apostles and the Prophets,” and which for that reason “are most *surely* believed amongst us.” It is equally incontestible, that the more generally any one of those supposed deducibles from the Gospel has been impugned, especially by contentious, disinterested, and well informed Christians, the less distinctly must it have been revealed. The less distinctly it has been revealed, the greater is the possibility of its being erroneous; and, by necessary consequence, the greater the impropriety of dogmatically insisting on it, as an *essential* article of belief. Reader, can you start any objection to the principle of reasoning here laid down? Let it be applied then to the subject immediately under consideration. The doctrines of the Trinity, Original Sin, Justification by Faith, and Regeneration by the Spirit, are set up in the Overtures as a standard, without conformity to which, no one is to be received into the bosom of the Church. Now, granting not only the *possibility* but the *probability* of these doctrines being agreeable to Scripture; still, if they cannot be stated in the pure and unmixed phraseology of Scripture, they do not rest on the surest possible foundation, and therefore ought not to be enforced as conditions of Christian fellowship. To thrust forth from the pale of communion, any believer in the Gospel, merely because he will not venture to affirm, that certain things are revealed in the book of life, which no man has ever yet been able to express in the language of that book, is to contradict the inspired penman’s assertion, that “the law of the Lord is perfect,” and to admit the monstrous and blasphemous principle, that the words of eternal truth are ambiguous and insufficient on subjects which involve the eternal happiness or the eternal misery of those to whom they have been addressed.

Let the minister who is conscientiously persuaded, that the doctrines laid down in the Overtures are well

founded, avow them as openly, and inculcate them on his people as earnestly, as he pleases. Let him incase an illuminated transcript of them in a frame made of cedar of lebanon, and bind the frame about his neck with a chain of gold. Let him write them, if he will, on the tablet of his heart. Let him think, and converse, and preach, and write on no other subject whatever—but let him not dare to consecrate his own *fallible interpretations* of Scripture, and revere the “words of man’s wisdom” as equal in authority to the word of God. To profess, and endeavour to propagate his favourite opinions, is one thing—to impose them on his fellow-christians, as terms of communion, is an affair totally distinct. This most important distinction has been almost invariably overlooked by the high Calvinistic party in the Synod. Often, and often, have they charged us with inconsistency, because, whilst we resisted the Overtures and the Trinitarian requisition, we did not hesitate to declare and support our own religious views. The avowals of sentiment made by us from the pulpit, and in the Synod, were represented as tantamount to formal subscriptions of a creed. But, did *we* ever attempt to make concurrence with us on controverted subjects, a condition of church membership? Did *we* ever attempt to *extort* from our brethren a confession of their faith? Did *we* ever attempt to subject any man to the cruel alternative of becoming either a hypocrite or a beggar; of either renouncing integrity or starving with his family? No. Our declarations of belief were, and ever will be, perfectly unconstrained. We make them under no undue influence. We submit to no human dictation; but merely exercise the “liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free”—a liberty which we are as willing to concede to others, as we are strenuous in demanding it for ourselves. In our opinion, the *essential* doctrines of Christianity are those which are common to *all* sects, not those which are peculiar to any. Still we are far, very far indeed, from supposing, that the disputed articles of faith are things of little, or no consequence. *Some* of them we regard as highly important, and as productive of very considerable influence on human virtue and happiness. It is, therefore, our wish, that every man should be allowed to embrace and advocate those tenets which he believes in his soul to be agreeable to

truth, and conducive to godliness—a licence which need not create schism in any church.

A well known party in the Synod are accustomed to express themselves in such strains as the following:—“O! *our* people! *our* precious people! To *us*, as a *body*, the charge of their souls has been committed. *We* must answer to God for their soundness in the faith. How enormous will be our guilt, and how great our condemnation, should any of *our* congregations be led astray! Dreadful will be our doom, if we make not such legislative enactments as will guard them from the deleterious influence of heterodoxy, and secure for them a supply of the ‘pure milk of the word!’” To these gentlemen of tender consciences I would say—Be not alarmed. We are just as responsible for your people as you are for ours. Whence do you derive this right to regulate the opinions of congregations, or of individuals or persons, about which wise and good men have disagreed? I tell you plainly, that on such disputed points you have, as an ecclesiastical court, no jurisdiction over us—we seek not your sanction—we preach not in your name. Let each of you attend to his own flock—as a body you have no authority in matters of faith. You have not the effrontery to claim it in direct terms—though you do exercise it indirectly. Having no authority, you are free from all responsibility. You cannot be answerable for abusing, or not using a power which you do not possess. But I find I have digressed.

I was about to observe, that disputed tenets, though important, may not be essential. And it is only disagreement about essentials that can justify separation. Persons entertaining discordant sentiments respecting some of the controverted principles of theology, could not, perhaps, with mutual comfort and edification, join *habitually* in congregational services; yet, they are co-believers on so many fundamental points, that they might amicably and usefully co-operate in managing the general concerns of a church. Such co-operation was, for many years, practically exemplified in the Synod of Ulster—and was regarded by some “unenlightened” persons as a manifestation of Christian forbearance and charity, which was highly creditable to the Body. But a “religious revival” has taken place, and some leading members have discovered that the peace which had long

prevailed in the church was "the peace of the grave." Christ and his Apostles adopted a mode of procedure very different from that which has recently been enforced by the Synod. It is universally acknowledged, that at the time of our Saviour's sojourn upon earth, the Jews *were*, what they still *are*, Unitarians to a man---yet he occasionally joined them in the worship of the Synagogue. Paul did the same thing at Ephesus, and at other places; and did not separate from his countrymen till they contradicted and blasphemed. Amongst the primitive disciples a disagreement arose concerning a matter which would now be deemed of vital importance---namely, whether the Gentile converts should, or should not, be obliged to conform in all things to the law of Moses. And how was the controversy settled? Not by separation---but by mutual concession. If, therefore, we take the New Testament for our guide, we may join in communion with people, with whom we cannot join in opinion on some important articles of faith.

It may be supposed from the strain of the foregoing remarks, that I regard as an evil, the schism which has taken place in the Synod. In one respect I do:---in another, I most certainly do not. Whilst I deplore the "simulation and dissimulation," the calumny, uncharitableness, and breach of faith, by which that event has been accompanied; I rejoice in the conviction that it will be ultimately productive of good. It has already very materially contributed to the diffusion of pure and undefiled principles of religion. The fomentors of the division may be styled, the *Apostles of Unitarianism*. For every single Anti-trinitarian that was in the province of Ulster when they commenced their crusades, there are now ten. To me it would be matter of sincere regret were they to relax in their exertions. Go on, gentlemen, and may you continue to prosper as you have hitherto done. A few more achievements similar to those which you have performed at Ballycarry and Greyabbey, will open the eyes of the public, and enable them duly to appreciate your principles. You have let forth a deluge of intolerance, but the ark of truth is buoyant and has arisen with the rising of the waters. When they retreat, you will see it settled on higher ground than it originally occupied. You found it in the valleys---you will leave it on the mountain. But these beneficial ef-

fects of your conduct do in no degree diminish its culpability. You contemplated a far different result.--- Though "God maketh the wrath of man to praise him," still that wrath is sinful. The happy consequences by which Joseph's captivity was unexpectedly attended were no extenuation of the unnatural cruelty of his brethren.

SIGMA.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

FOR THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

The following little piece (*a widow's mite*!) is offered at the altar of free inquiry---it being my humble opinion, that Man has a right to judge for himself, more especially in matters where the perfections of the *Deity* appear to be dishonoured or misrepresented.

Belfast, March, 1830.

J. S.

THE BIGOT.

The Bigot may dream o'er his visions of Glory,
And doom to destruction all sects but his own:—
OUR FATHER and GOD! make us humble before THEE,
To trust in thy goodness and mercy alone!
For the calls of sweet Mercy, to Reason are dearer
Than threat'nings of wrath, which but harrow the mind;
How the heart burns with love to behold and to hear her!
Her arms wide extended to bless all mankind!

The Bigot exhibits the bounteous Creator
Vindictive in wrath, against reasoning Man,
Though goodness and love reign triumphant in Nature,
Whose bounty supplies what His wisdom began,
All his works to adore, and to praise HIM invite us--
The earth's verdant beauties, the star spangled sky
The Sun, and the Moon, and Seasons delight us;
And the glorious universe gladdens the eye.

Can a BEING so WISE and so merciful, ever
Have doomed endless woe to the spirit he gave?
Religion revolts at such vengeance!—O! never!
God is love---Man his offspring- -whom Christ died to save.
When Inquiry hath found, what false teachers have hidden,
The Bigot shall wake from his dreams into day;
Then no more shall their dupes be by sophistry ridden,
For Error shall yield up to Reason, her sway.

LOST RECORDS OF BANGOR PRESBYTERY.

THESE Records have been missing for 56 years. They include thirty-five, from April 1739 to June 1774; and are comprised in one folio volume. At the last of these periods, the Presbytery divided, on occasion of Dr. Stephenson's ordination at Greyabbey. The separation was peaceable; and the minority founded the Presbytery of Belfast. One of these was the Rev. William Laird, minister of the Third Congregation. It appears, from a note in the hand-writing of Mr. Atkinson, High Constable of Belfast, that, on the separation, Mr. Laird retained the Records. The memorandum is inserted in the last page, in these words: "This book was given to Will. Atkinson, by the heirs of the late Rev. Mr. Laird, December 21, 1791.

"Will. Atkinson made an offer of this book to the Rev. Presbytery of Bangor, through the medium of the Rev. James Bryson, one of their members, who brought their answer and thanks, in these polite words: 'that they cared not for it; nor did they think it worth their looking after.'" How it came into the hands of the present possessor is not known, even to himself.

While the conduct and principles of the Presbytery of Bangor and the congregation of Greyabbey excite so much interest, and occupy so much of the attention of the public, I have thought, that it would be acceptable to the readers of "The Bible Christian," to have some account of these Bodies in former times. I confess too, that I gladly avail myself of an opportunity to divert my thoughts from the dissensions of jarring zealots, and repose them on the "godly quiet" of the old Bangor Presbytery. It may be a relief to the reader too, to forget for a moment the broils and contentions of the present day. Here we meet with no swaddling, gossiping, and "creeping into houses, to lead captive silly women;" no "lying tongues, that sow discord among brethren;" no double dealing, base intrigues, and secret plots against the reputation of Ministers, and the peace of their congregations. The old Presbytery of Bangor contained about twenty Congregations, in the best informed part of the North of Ireland, and affords a favourable sample of the Synod of Ulster in those days.

Here we see Masterton, the great champion of Subscription in the seven General Synods, with Kinkead, Huey, Warnick, and Buchanan "taking sweet counsel together," with men of liberal and moderate principles, uniting to accommodate the tender consciences of their licentiates and candidates; and co-operating cordially and harmoniously in ordering their Churches, giving mutual assistance and holding Ministerial communion. Such too was the character of the Synod during the greater part of the last century, and the beginning of this. This state of affairs has often called forth the praise of the friends of peace and liberty, and as often the censure of the lovers of discord and spiritual tyranny.

The conduct of the Presbytery appears to have been very mild and temperate. They had no disputes about doctrines. Their visitations were frequent, and always amicable and satisfactory. The prevalence of liberal principles in Greyabbey, will appear to have had an earlier origin, than has been assigned to it, not only from their choice of Ministers, but from the characters of the men whom they invited on trial. The state of the Presbytery and congregation, since the separation in 1774, is well known. The subscribers to the joint letter to Mr. Montgomery of Rosemount acted discreetly in passing over the two succeeding Ministers, Dr. Stephenson and Mr. Porter, as they were strenuous Antitrinitarians, and equally averse from Calvinism.

In the following extracts, the reader will see distinctly the decay of Orthodoxy, as connected with the changes in the form of subscription.

In 1698, the candidate for the Ministry was obliged to assent to "all the articles" of the Confession, including, of course, those relative to Church Government and the power of the Magistrate in Ecclesiastical affairs, particularly his "power to call Synods, to be present at them, and to provide, that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God."

In 1735 the Confession had fallen into such neglect, that the Clerk of the Synod would not find any formula of subscription. He, therefore, inserted the form, found in the minutes of the Armagh Presbytery. By this the candidate declared his belief "that the Westminster Confession was founded upon, and agreeable to, the word of God."

In 1764, Mr. Bryson, afterwards of Belfast, assented only to "all the *important articles of Religion*." He was followed by several, without saying what doctrines they considered as important or true, probably with some mental reservation. Some time after, the subscribers declared their belief, that the Confession *contained* the essential doctrines of the Gospel, and *as such* they adopted it as the Confession of their Faith; implying, that they assented only to those doctrines which they deemed essential, without regard to what else it might contain. About the same time, others omitted the last clause, "and as such I adopt it as the confession of my Faith," which reduced it to a mere assertion of a matter of fact, without any declaration of Faith. But Dr. Stephenson scorned all these subterfuges, and refused to sign any formula; justly observing, that "the form produced to him implied neither belief in the confession of Faith, nor in the Scriptures of Truth, nor in the Christian Religion." It was in these words:—"I believe that the most important doctrines of Christianity are contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith." "May not," says he, "one, who does not believe the Christian Religion, give his assent to such a form? As no man of understanding ever considered the Confession of Faith as an infallible guide, I did not choose, by prevarication or deceit, to lead you to believe that I did. Though I could have signed the form without prevarication, yet the doing of it would have implied the acknowledgment of an authority in men, which, as it cannot be shown to proceed from Christ or his Apostles, is therefore groundless and presumptuous." This is the only firm ground, the post so manfully defended by the Antrim Presbytery fifty years before; and now occupied by the Remonstrants. At his ordination he was asked, whether he meant to make any declaration of his Religious opinions; and he voluntarily read a summary of his Faith, which he had prepared for the satisfaction of the people of Grey Abbey, who had unanimously supplicated that he might be ordained, without regard to subscription to any human composition. This declaration he had offered to submit to the Presbytery, and to subscribe it. He was ordained on the 21st of June, 1774, and, within a few days after, at the ensuing Synod, the dissentient members were formed into the

Presbytery of Belfast. He continued Pastor till about the year 1780, since which time he has practised as a Physician, in high estimation, in Belfast; having, previously to his ordination, studied Anatomy and Surgery in Dublin, and Medicine in Edinburgh. Thus, after discharging the duty of one profession, he has attained to eminence in another, and held fast his faith and integrity to the verge of a very long life, without the aid of the Westminster Confession.

"A cry of Heresy was immediately raised. *Arian* and *Socinian* were terms of reproach thought too mild: *Deist*, *Infidel* and *Heathen*, were very freely applied." This obliged him to publish his "Declaration of Faith with Reasons, &c.;" and a Motto from the Confession itself—"God alone is Lord of Conscience." In this Pamphlet he vindicated his conduct by the same authority—"All Synods and Councils, since the Apostles' time, whether general or particular, may err, and have erred. Therefore, they are not to be made the *Rule of Faith and Practice*, but to be used as a help in both." The Westminster Divines could not, therefore, consistently set up the Confession as an infallible Rule; and, probably, never intended that it should be imposed as a Test. He also pleaded, that he could not understand it, and gave the following example. "It is asserted in the 29th Chapter, that 'Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements, do then also, by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually, receive and feed upon Christ crucified, and all the benefits of his death; the body and blood of Christ being then, not corporally or carnally in, with, or under the bread and wine, yet as really, but spiritually, present to the Faith of Believers in the Ordinance, as the elements themselves are to the outward senses.'"—That flesh and blood can be, at the same time, spiritually present, and corporally absent, was a mystery beyond his comprehension. It was a contrivance to steer between Popery and Lutheranism, Transubstantiation and Consubstantiation.

This brought out some sensible, and not intemperate "Remarks," under the name of the Rev. John King, of Holywood. This gentleman was said to be so obliging, on more occasions than one, as to father the literary progeny of his friends, who were not so ambitious of

figuring in a title-page. * To this were subjoined—"Reasons of Dissent, &c." These, also, were very moderate and inoffensive. The insertion of these *Reasons*, (for the dissentient brethren did not wish them to be considered as a *Protest*,) was deferred till next meeting of Presbytery, that the parties might confer upon them; but the erection of the dissentient brethren into a separate Body, took place at the Synod, which assembled in the following week.

ERASMUS.

Extracts from the Records of the Bangor Presbytery.

APRIL 10, 1739—at Newtown. Met for the ordination of James Smith. Sederunt, Ministers, Stuart, Mastertown, A. Montgomery, N. Orr, R. Cunningham, W. Smith, And. Malcom, Jas. Mackay, Maxwell Stuart, Jas. M'Culloch, A. Scott, Gilbert Kennedy (Correspondent,) with eight Elders.

"The Clerk went to the tent, where the people were met, and intimated, that the Presbytery was now sitting, ready to hear, if any had any thing to object against Mr. Smith's ordination; but none appeared. Then Mr. Smith subscribed our usual formula, viz. I believe the Westminster Confession of Faith is founded on the Word of God, and agreeable thereunto; and as such I subscribe it, as my Confession of Faith." This agrees with the Synod's formula, in 1735.

An application from some families in the Ten Towns, by *Nath. M'Quide* and others, Commissioners, signifying their desire to adhere to Grey Abbey Congregation. Refused. Appeal to Synod. Granted by the Synod.

May 8. An application from Grey Abbey, that the

* A Belfast wit, when pressed to accompany a friend to hear Mr. King preach, replied,

"I cannot go, I will not go,
To hear John King so dull;
His Meeting-house for me shall be
As empty as his skull."

In return for this, he was treated with some satirical verses on himself, in the name of John King.

townland of Black Abbey be ordered to join their Congregation, because a part of the manor of Rosemount, though heretofore a part of Newtown Congregation. Refused. Appeal to Synod.

April 10, 1739. "Grey Abbey to be supplied by Mr. Dickson." (Mr. Cochrane is not mentioned. If the Congregation was erected in 1736, his Ministry must have been of a very short duration.)

Oct. 1741. Grey Abbey applied for Mr. Dickson, as ordinary supplier, promising £28 10s. in all. Informed, that the Synod's quota was £30.—Jan. 13, 1742. Hugh Dickson's ordination. "It was intimated at the several doors of the Meeting-house, that the Presbytery was about to ordain Mr Dickson, if none appeared to object to it; and none appearing, after sufficient time given, Mr. Dickson subscribed and was ordained." This form was usually observed. The Proclamation was made by the sexton, as some of the people might be in the green, perhaps hearing a sermon at a tent. When this was not the case, he was only sent into the Meeting-house from the vestry, where the Presbytery were assembled.

Oct. 1, 1745. Holywood 2d is called a *late erected* Congregation—(though lately said to have been erected in 1729.)

April 20, 1756. A visitation at Grey Abbey. At this time, there appears to have been 17 Members in the Presbytery. The Minister preached. Presbytery removed into the vestry. Mr. Dickson examined and removed. Session called in and questioned. Their Commissioner spoke for them. Presbytery returned to the Meeting-house. Questions proposed to the Commissioner of the Congregation—recommended to raise the stipend to £40. "There seems at present to be the greatest harmony and concord between the Minister, Session, and Congregation." The approbation of Presbytery to the appointment of Elders, and supplying vacancies in Sessions, is always required.

April 14, 1761. Mr. Kinkead and the Congregation of Killinchy received into the Presbytery. Aug. 11, 1761, a similar application from Ballywalter, then vacant. Received, although they had formerly withdrawn from the inspection of this Presbytery in an irregular manner, and the Presbytery were unwilling to increase their number.

Dec. 20, 1763. Lisburn applied to the Presbytery to procure them a hearing of James Bryson, a probationer of Armagh Presbytery.

June 6, 1764. James Bryson ordained. Hitherto the usual formula was subscribed; but his subscription was in these words; "I believe the Westminster Confession of Faith, as to all the *important articles* of Religion, to be founded upon and agreeable to the Holy Scriptures; and as such, I subscribe it, as the Confession of my Faith." Thirteen Ministers present; no objection made. The only variation hitherto was trivial. They sometimes subscribed the *Westminster Confession*, and sometimes the *Doctrines of the Confession*.

Dec. 6. James Malcom subscribed in nearly the same terms with Bryson; and also James Graham, May 13, 1766. June 3, 1766. Hugh Smith was ordained in Dundonald without subscription; but he had been transmitted from the Presbytery of Killileagh. June 24. Thos. Kennedy subscribed the same formula; 18 members present.

On account of their great number, the Presbytery seem to have acted, in part, by Committees. There is frequent mention of the *Committee of the Place*; and on the 1st of Sept., 1767, Messrs. Stoupe and Stitt were introduced by the *Lower Committee*, who "had taken some specimens from them, as private trials." About the same time, Mr. McKee was taken under their care. These three young men made another innovation in the formula, confessing only, "that the Westminster Confession of Faith *contained* the essential doctrines of the Christian Religion, and as such subscribed it." The Presbytery seem now to leave their licentiates at liberty, as to the form of their subscription. Accordingly, Mr. Millar subscribed the following: "I believe the Westminister Confession of Faith, as to the *principal doctrines* of Religion, to be founded upon and agreeable to the Scripture; and I subscribe it as the Confession of my Faith." Stoupe and Stitt declined subscribing to the clause, "as the Confession of their Faith;" and only signed simpliciter; and Mr. Porter went a step further: "I hereby declare my hearty assent to the sacred truths of Divine Revelation, as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and believe, that the pri-

cipal doctrines of Christianity are contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith."

These latitudinarian subscriptions did not injure their popularity, or render them less acceptable to the people; for Clough and Dunmurry applied for a hearing of Stitt and Porter, and gave Porter a call; and Grey Abbey asked for Porter, and gave Stouppe a call. Mr. Stouppe was also invited to Enniskillen, and afterwards settled in Dunmurry. Mr. Stitt had also a call from Castle-reagh. Mr. Thomas Kennedy, when ordained for Williamsburgh, August, 1771, subscribed again, but in freer terms: viz. "I believe, that all the essential and most important doctrines of Religion are *contained* in the Westminster Confession of Faith, agreeably to the Holy Scriptures, and *as such* I acknowledge it as the Confession of my Faith." This marks his change of sentiment between 1766 and 1771. James Caldwell, in his ordination at Dundonald, subscribed this form: "I believe all the most important doctrines to be *contained* in the Westminster Confession of Faith." He had been invited to Comber, and had a call from Grey Abbey.

April 27, 1773. An application from Grey Abbey, for a hearing of Mr. Stephenson, a Probationer of the Presbytery of Monaghan. A Committee was appointed to receive and appoint him, on his landing at Donaghadee, from Scotland.

Sep. 25, 1773. An unanimous application for a Minister, to moderate a call for S. M. Stephenson, at Grey Abbey.—April 19, 1774. After his trials were approved of, the following formula was presented, to be subscribed:—"I believe the most important Doctrines of Christianity are contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith." "Mr. Stephenson being called upon to subscribe, mentioned some difficulties that appeared to him in complying with what we require of candidates, with respect to subscription; upon which the Presbytery resolved to put off the decision of this matter until our next meeting." "May 31. Mr. Stephenson, after a long conference with the Presbytery, particularly with respect to the points which were discussed at last meeting, and having answered to that question, whether he believed that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was a Divine Being by Nature or by Office, that he believed he was Divine by nature; and having also removed the

greatest part of the scruples entertained against him at last meeting, respecting the Doctrine of Christ's atonement for the sins of true believers, to the satisfaction of the most of the members now present, he was asked, whether he would subscribe the Westminster Confession of Faith or not, to which he answered in the negative; after which the question was put—Proceed to Ordination or not? and it carried by one vote—Ordain: upon which the following brethren dissented from the Resolution of the Presbytery; Messrs. Alexander, Henry, Laird, Kinkead and King, and promised to give their reasons in due time. Mr. Stephenson, being asked whether he would accept the Call of the Congregation of Grey Abbey or not, answered in the affirmative; upon which the Presbytery fixed the time of his Ordination to be the 21st of June—Mr. Caldwell to Preach and Mr. Stoupe to Ordain." Mr. Cochran to serve the Edict.—Next meeting to be at Antrim, in the intervals of the general Synod, last Tuesday in June.

The Members present were—*Ministers*: J. Bryson Sam. Alexander, Jas. Henry, W. Laird, Jos. Kinkead, Jos. Mitchel, Jas. Hall, John King, Jas. Cochran, Jas. Stoupe, Jas. Caldwell, John Adams, with seven elders.

June 21. Grey Abbey.—Sederunt, Messrs. Bryson, Hull, Cochran, Stoupe, Caldwell, Adams, with four elders.

"Messrs. Armstrong, Smyth, Dickson and Porter being present, were asked to sit with us, to which they consented."

"The sexton was ordered to advertise to the Congregation, that if any of them could offer sufficient reasons why Mr. Stephenson should not be ordained their minister, they would lay these reasons immediately before the Presbytery. No objections having been offered, the Presbytery asked the Congregation whether they had given, or were willing to give security for Mr. Stephenson's stipend? This was their usual practice. They answered—they had not as yet, but they were willing; but Mr Stephenson declared that he considered the affection of the people as the best security, and desired no other; upon which the Presbytery dropped any further inquiry upon this head."

"Mr. Stephenson was now asked whether he had drawn up any Declaration of his Faith, respecting the

important or essential Doctrines. He said he had, which he now produced and read, which was as follows:—

“I believe that the *Scriptures* of the Old and New Testament are the Word of God;—that they are the *only infallible* Rule of Faith and Manners;—that nothing can be added to, or taken from this Word which we have received, without offending the author. And although many human compositions may assist us in acquiring the knowledge of Divine things, yet that none of them should be substituted in place of the *Scriptures* of truth, or so esteemed as to lessen our regard for the Word of God.

“I believe that there is *one God*, who is the great first cause of all things. That he is a pure, independent, eternal, unchangeable Spirit; possessed of infinite power, and the most perfect wisdom, justice, holiness, goodness and truth;—that he created the Heavens and the Earth, and every living creature which existeth and moveth in them;—that he preserveth all things in being;—that his absolute dominion is over all the works of his hands;—that he disposeth all things according to the spotless rectitude of his own unerring councils.

“I believe that his *Providence* extendeth to every creature; and that it will at length appear in favour of righteousness and true holiness.

“I believe that there is a difference between good and evil, virtue and vice;—that mankind can discern this difference, and can chuse the former and refuse the latter, so as to be the proper objects of rewards and punishments.

“I believe that God created man in his own image, with understanding and conscience; with pious and brotherly affections; and with a power of acting according to these: yet that he wandered from the ways of understanding, and sought out for himself many inventions; and so far estranged himself from God, defaced his image, destroyed his law originally written upon the human heart, so that the saying of the Apostle, by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, is verified by experience.

“I believe that God, at sundry times and divers manners, spake unto the fathers of the Jewish nation by Moses and the Prophets; and that he, in the fullness of time, spake unto the world by his only begotten and well-beloved Son.

“I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God;—that he is Divine by nature;—that he is the brightness of his Father's glory;—the express image of his person;—that by him were all things created, visible and invisible.—That he is the only mediator between God and man—the true Messiah,—the Redeemer of the World, formerly spoken of by Moses and the Prophets, who though being in form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God; yet in order to perform the great work of our redemption, he took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man;—that in the days of his flesh he published the everlasting gospel; and did and suffered whatever is recorded of him in the *Scriptures*, in order to reconcile us to God;—that he died to take away the sins of the world and thus hath procured eternal redemption for all

those who believe in him, and endeavour sincerely to obey the Gospel, for, saith the Apostle, we have redemption through his Blood, even the forgiveness of sins,—that, having made atonement for the people, and by one sacrifice of himself perfected for ever them that are sanctified, he arose again from the dead according to the Scriptures for our justification—that he ascended up on high, and is seated at the right hand of the father, to make intercession for the truly penitent—that he is the *Prophet, Priest, and King* of the church—and that he shall come to judge the world at the last day.

I believe that the Holy Spirit is concerned in the great work of our salvation—that he is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son.—That he spake by the Prophets, and, according to our blessed Lord's promise, led the Apostles into all truth, enabling them to work the miracles performed by them, and that he is the guide and sanctifier of all good christians, in a way which is consistent with infinite wisdom and the rational and accountable nature of man—and that in this way as well as by his word and ordinances, Christ will be with all his faithful disciples to the end of the world.

“I believe that the *human soul is immortal*; that the cultivation of the powers of our minds in this world is necessary in order to obtain the happiness of the blessed in a future life. That, as without Faith no man can please God, so ‘without holiness no man shall see the Lord.’

“I believe there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust. That God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ. And that there shall then be a final retribution of rewards and punishments according to the prevailing temper and disposition of our minds, and then the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.”

“This Declaration was considered and approved of; and the Presbytery ordered our Clerk to transmit a Copy of the above Declaration to every Session in our Bounds; after which the Presbytery proceeded to ordain Mr. Stephenson.”

“The Moderator had a letter to be communicated, which was read, and contained the Rev. Messrs. Alexander's, Henry's, Laird's, Kinkead's and King's reasons of dissent from the Resolution at our last Meeting, to ordain the Rev. Samuel Stephenson. After attentive consideration of these reasons, the Presbytery is of opinion, that, out of respect to the dissentient Brethren, these reasons ought not to be inserted in our Records till after our next Meeting; but we are of opinion that they have not perfectly recollected, or so fully stated some circumstances of considerable importance, as upon second thoughts we hope they would wish to have done.”

This is the last entry in the Book.

There is no Roll of Members, nor list of Congregations: but in the year 1776, the state of the Presbytery seems to have been as follows :

Ministers :—W. Laird, J. Moorhead, And. Kennedy, H. Dickson, S. Alexander, J. Huey, J. M'Kean, W. Warnick, J. Kinkead, R. Walker, J. Mitchel, W. Rowan, J. Hull, J. King, J. Cochran, J. Bryson, J. Malcolm, H. Smyth, R. Cunningham, Gilbert Kennedy (twice mentioned), David Fullerton (once). The last two, though entered in the list of members, were, I suppose, only Correspondents.

Congregations :—Belfast 3d, Newtown 2d, Annahilt, Comber, Grey Abbey, Saintfield, Castlereagh, Holywood 2d, Dundonald, Bangor, Moira, Moneyrea, Drumbo, Lisburn, Dunmurry, Donaghadee, Ballynahinch, Ballin-derry, Ballywalter, Mourne, Killinchy, Portaferry.---Ministers, 19.—Congregations, 22.---Three vacancies.

In the Appendix to the first volume of Wodrow's *History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland*, there is "a List of the Ministers in the North of Ireland, who refused conformity to Episcopacy, as it came to his hands under the correction of the Rev. Ministers of that Kingdom, in 1663." The following are the names of the Members of the Presbytery of Bangor, or Newtown according to Wodrow. Their Congregations are inserted here from a list in my copy, added in old writing. By the same hand, *Newtown* is changed into *Bangor*, and *Grey* into *Greg*.

Andrew Stewart, *Donaghadee*.
Gilbert Ramsay, *Bangor*.
John Gray (Greg), *Newtown*.
William Reid, *Ballywalter*.
John Drysdale, *Portaferry*.
James Gordon, *Comber*.
Thomas Peebles, *Hillsborough*.
Hugh Wilson, *Castlereagh*.

Michael Bruce, *Killinchy*.
William Richardson, *Killileagh*.
John Fleming, *Downpatrick*.
Alex. Hutchinson, *Ponochneive*.
Henry Livingstone, *Drumbo*.
Henry Hunter.
James Campbel.
Andrew M'Cormick.

The Conformed Ministers, were

Mungo Bennet,
George Wallace,
Robert Rowan,

Donald M'Neil,
Andrew M'Neil,

There are also lists of the Presbyteries of Antrim, Rout, Dungenan (Dungannon), and Lagan, all of the Synod of Ballymenoch; with a M.S. note, that "the Original M.S. of the Acts of the Presbytery of Lagan,

are in the hands of William Atkinson." They are now in mine, entitled, "A Continuation of the Register of the Presbytery of Lagan, from Aug. 21, 1672, to Dec. 31, 1695." This is a model for Presbyterial minutes, being neatly written, ruled, and noted in the margin, with an Index, and clasps to the cover. I have also the *Down Presbytery Book*, from January 7, 1706-7, to June 22, 1715; the minutes of the *Meeting of Antrim*, from October 11, 1654, to March 3, 1657-8; and a copy of the Adair Manuscript. I shall willingly communicate, out of these records, any particulars that may be required towards completing the History of the Presbyterians of Ireland, on their being specified to me in writing.

ERASMUS.

SCRIPTURE ITS OWN INTERPETER.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 135.)

PASSAGES selected from the Acts and Epistles proving what views the Apostles entertained of the Saviour, of whom they were to bear witness, and into whose faith they were to baptize all nations.

ACTS i. 7.—"And he [Jesus] said unto them, it is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which the *Father* hath put in his own power."

— ii. 22.—"Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you. 23.—Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. 24.—Whom God hath raised up," &c.

— 32.—This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. 33.—Therefore being by the right hand of God *exalted*, and having *received* of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear."

— 35.—"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that *God hath made* that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both *Lord and Christ*."

It has been observed that Christ is described as inferior to the Father no less than ten times in this very discourse; namely, "Jesus a *man approved of God*," "signs which *God did by him*"—"him being *delivered* by the foreknowledge of God,"—"ye have taken and slain," "whom *God hath raised up*." "*God would raise up Christ*." "This Jesus hath *God raised up*." "Being *by the right hand of God exalted*, and having *received* of the Father the promise," &c. "The Lord said to my

Lord, sit thou on my right until *I make* thy enemies thy footstool." "God hath *made* that same Jesus both Lord and Christ."

ACTS iii. 13.—The God of Abraham, &c. hath glorified his son Jesus whom ye delivered up."

—— 15.—"And killed the Prince of Life whom God hath raised from the dead."

—— 20.—"And he *shall send* Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you."

—— 26.—"Unto you first God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you."

—— iv. 10.—"Be it known unto you all—that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom *God raised from the dead*, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole."

—— 26.—"The rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against *his* Christ. 27.—For of a truth against *thy holy child* Jesus, whom *thou* hast anointed," &c.

—— 30.—"By stretching forth thine hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of *thy holy child* Jesus."

Observe, that the whole of this passage, from v. 24 to the end of the chapter, is a prayer to the God who anointed Jesus, &c.; that is—to the Father: it not only, therefore, clearly proves superiority on the part of the Father, but that, in an instance in which the miracle had a tendency to direct their thoughts with more particular intentness to the Son, they leave the natural current of their thoughts and address their thanksgivings and prayers to the Father alone.

ACTS x. 38.—"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed with the devil; *for God was with him.*"

—— 40. "Him God raised up the third day and showed him openly."

42. "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was *ordained of God* to be the Judge of quick and dead.

Observe, that it is a matter of some moment to consider what idea these words were likely to give Cornelius of the Messiah—as whatever opinion he formed at the time was sufficient to qualify him for the reception of the Holy Ghost.

ACTS xiii. 23 —"Of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus."

—— 30.—"But God raised him from the dead."—See also v. 33, 34, 37.

ACTS xiii. 38. "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that *through this man* is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."

Observe, that supposing the Trinitarian scheme to be true, it is still through the human nature of Christ that forgiveness is preached; and as the human nature, being created, cannot be Omnipotent, there is a possibility of salvation without omnipotence suffering and dying.—And it further appears from the verse that I shall next quote, that this human nature is adequate to the judging of the world in righteousness.

ACTS xvii. 31.—"Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that *man* whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."*

See this subject "of the preaching of the Apostles in the Acts" more fully considered in the "Observations on the Doctrine of the Trinity, occasioned by the Rev. James Carlile's book."—*Belfast*, 1828.

ROM. i. 3, 4.—"Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by his resurrection from the dead."

— 8. "First, I thank *my God, through Jesus Christ*, for you all."

— 9. "For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of his Son."

— ii. 16.—"In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ."

If Jesus Christ be spoken of here in his divine nature, then he is, in that nature, inferior to God, who will use him as his Minister in judging the world; if he be spoken of in his human nature, then a mere man is

* Locke explains the phrase "according to the flesh," in the following words—"according to the flesh *i. e.* as to the body which he took in the womb of the Blessed Virgin his mother"—and the phrase "according to the spirit of holiness" thus, "*i. e.* as to that more pure and spiritual part which in him over ruled all, and kept even his frail flesh holy and spotless from the least taint of sin and was of *another extraction*." And in a note, he further says, "*according to the spirit of holiness* is here manifestly opposed to *according to the flesh* in the foregoing verse, and so must mean that more pure and spiritual part in him which, by divine extraction, he had immediately from God; unless this be so understood the antithesis is lost." This passage alone seems to be conclusive as to Locke's anti-Socinian and anti-Trinitarian views.

able to judge the secrets of men, which power the same school of Theology ascribes to Omniscience alone.

ROM. iii. 24, 25.—“ Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus—whom *God hath set forth* to be a propitiation through faith in his blood,” &c.

— iv. 24.—“ But for us also to whom it shall be imputed if we believe *on him that raised up* Jesus our Lord from the dead.”

— v. 10.—“ And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.”

— viii. 32.—“ He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not, with him also, freely give us all things?”

— 34.—“ It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, *who is even at the right hand of God*, who also maketh intercession for us.”

— x. 9.—“ That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

From the preceding verses it appears, that this is the faith which the Apostles preached. This simple faith, then, is sufficient for our salvation. How different from the complicated and mysterious confessions of faith in later times !

ROM. xv. 6, &c.—“ That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, *even the Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ : wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the *glory of God*. Now, I say that Jesus Christ was a Minister of the circumcision for the truth of God ! to confirm the promises made unto the fathers ; and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.”

— xvi. 25, 27.—“ Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my Gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ—to God only wise be glory, *through Jesus Christ* for ever.—Amen.

1 COR. i. 30.—“ In Christ Jesus, *who of God is made unto us* wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption.”

— iii. 23. “ And ye are Christ's, and Christ is *God's*.”

— vi. 14.—“ And God hath raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.”

— viii. 6.—“ But to us there is but *one God—the Father*, of whom are all things, and we in him ; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.”

— xi. 3. “ But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ : and the head of the woman is the man—and the *head of Christ is God*.”

— xv. 15.—“ Because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ, whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.”

— 24, 27, 28.—“ Then cometh the end when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, *even the Father*..... For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that *he* is excepted which did *put* all

things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the *Son* also *himself* be subject unto *him* that did put all things under him, that *God* may be all in all."

This is confessedly a most important passage of Scripture: it is of peculiar interest, as opening to us a view of the great scheme of redemption, even to its very consummation, and still further distinctly stating that it will be succeeded by a more glorious state, to which, in all probability, the Apostle refers in the book of Revelation, where he speaks of God being more immediately with his people, who shall "sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb;" but it is foreign from the immediate purpose of this paper to expatiate longer on this theme, at present. In addition to the remarks in your last number, I need only give in a note, the satisfactory paraphrase of one of the master spirits of English literature, whose glory and delight it was to search into and expound the word of God, and to promote the more cordial reception, and more perfect understanding of the Gospel of Christ: I mean the father of mental philosophy—John Locke—nor can I even *name* him, without associating with him the remainder of that noble triumvirate, Newton and Milton, who, to the glory of the English nation, have borne their testimony to the reasonableness of the Christian faith; and who, notwithstanding the pains and penalties that were in their day annexed to the avowal of religious opinions at variance with particular creeds, have borne as distinct testimony as the nature of their subjects would admit, to the great doctrine of *the unity of God and the inferiority of the Son*.*

* *Locke's paraphrase.*

COR. 20. 28.—"But in truth Christ is actually risen from the dead, and is become the first fruits of those who were dead. For since by man came death by man came also the resurrection of the dead, or restoration to life. For as the death that all men suffer is owing to Adam, so the life that all shall be restored to again is procured them by Christ. But they shall return to life again; not at once but in their proper order: Christ, the first fruits, is already risen; next after him shall rise those who are his people, his Church; and this shall be at his second coming. After that shall be the day of judgment, which shall bring to a conclusion and finish the whole dispensation to the race and posterity of Adam in this world; when Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to God the Father, which he shall not do till he hath destroyed all empire, power, and authority that shall be in the world besides. For he must reign till he has subdued and brought all his enemies into subjection to his kingdom. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For God

The description refers to the end of all things---to that state in which the disciples are to continue for ever, and thus concludes those temporizing expedients by which divines have attempted to account for the expressions of inferiority which are used with respect to Christ.—The Son is to deliver up the kingdom—the kingdom is to be delivered up to God—God, to whom it is to be delivered, is the Father. The object of the Son's reigning is to put all his enemies under his feet.—It is God who hath given the Son this power of putting all things (even death) under his feet.--God himself is excepted, and not included under the term "all things."—The Son is then to cease to reign, and be a subject.—It is to God who gave him his power (or to the Father,) that he is to be subject; and all this is to be done, that God may be all in all. Is then the person who is to deliver the kingdom, the same God—the same in substance—equal in power and glory with him to whom it is to be surrendered? Is the person to whom is given this power of putting all things under his feet, the same supreme God who has given the power? Is he, from whose dominion the supreme God is excepted, the same supreme God who is excepted from his own dominion? Is he, who is at the end of all things, to be subject to the Supreme God—the very same Supreme God with him to whom he is to be subjected; and all this that he himself may be all in all? Would not the affirmative answer to all these questions be a contradiction in terms; and is not this contradiction a necessary consequence of maintaining that Jesus Christ is the Supreme God? But then—this is an insuperable difficulty, and consequently, according to the latest canon of criticism, an unanswerable argument in favour of the scheme.

1 Cor. xv, 57.—“Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Finding that it would be impossible for you to insert all the remaining texts in proof of this important doctrine, in your present number, I think it better to stop

hath subjected all things to Christ; but when it is said all things are subjected, it is plain that he is to be excepted who did subject all things to him. But when all things shall be actually reduced under subjection to him, then even the Son himself, *i. e.* Christ, and his whole kingdom, he and all his subjects and members shall be subjected to him that gave him the kingdom and universal dominion, that God may immediately govern and influence all.”

at the end of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians; especially as the important passage quoted from the 15th chapter will afford food for very profitable reflection; both on the speculative doctrine so distinctly stated, and on the practical instruction, which the consideration of this awful scene, as fixing our final destiny, will impress upon the mind.

EREUNETES.

To the Editors of The Bible Christian.

GENTLEMEN,

Ehud's puny attempt to support the slander uttered by the Rev. John Brown, at the late meeting of Synod, has, in many respects, been most ably repelled by your correspondent ERASMUS. There is one point, however, which appears to have escaped the attention of that intelligent writer.

Mr. Brown represented the Geneva Unitarians as merely vociferating that abominable cry which I am unwilling to transcribe. But hear how the Editor of Orthodoxy has improved on the pious calumny! The legend "comes mended from his lips."—

"For ourselves, we can affirm, that we received from a native Swiss, the very same account which Mr. Brown gave in the Synod, but with this horrible addition, that the mob actually *crucified a dog*, to exhibit their contempt for the great doctrine of the Gospel. With the blasphemous expression, 'A bas Jesus Christ,' or the horrible act of affixing a dog upon a cross, we never blamed the Genevese *Pastors*. But we did, and we do exhibit them as lamentable samples of the effects of the Neologian, or mixed Arian and Socinian Ministry.* We shall rejoice to find that these reports are unfounded; and it rests upon the Genevese Pastors to give us the proof."

It would not be decorous to say, that this disgusting tale about the crucifixion of a dog is false; but I do tell

* Our readers will observe how artfully the term "Neologian" is associated with Arian and Socinian, as if they were synonymous words; although the writer can hardly be so ignorant as not to know that he might as fairly confound Tom Paine with Bishop Watson, or Tindal with Leland.—ED.

the Editor, that it will not be believed by a single individual of common sense, in the whole united empire. During the very worst times of the French revolution, a deed of this kind might possibly have been committed by the frantic rabble of Parisian atheists ; but that such an atrocious outrage should be perpetrated by the *Christian* population of Geneva—a population eminent for propriety of deportment, is a slander which the propagator himself does not credit. And observe the cool and cunning malignity with which he endeavours to excite popular odium against the Unitarian clergymen of *our own* country, and of *all* countries. He asserts, that such enormous acts of wickedness as those detailed, are the *natural* and *necessary* effects of our ministry. He, with equal charity and modesty, represents the system of belief embraced and advocated by Newton and Milton, and Locke, and Lindsay, and Price—men not more distinguished for learning than goodness—he represents their creeds as having an inevitable tendency to brutalize its adherents, and prompt them to mock the sufferings of their Redeemer. Let this defamer look into the records of his own church, and he will find, that, for many years past, the various degradations and suspensions which have been adjudged as punishments for serious offences,---the gentle rebukes that have been administered for such peccadilloes as subornation of perjury---and the rude castigations inflicted in open Synod on detected deviators from veracity---he will find, that such misfortunes have, by some unaccountable fatality, fallen exclusively on Orthodox heads. This remark has been extorted.

On hearing that certain individuals were to have the management of the “ Orthodox Presbyterian,” I did not expect the publication to be conducted with much candour ; but such an utter disregard of truth and decency as its pages have occasionally exhibited, I certainly did not contemplate. This is strong language ; but there is a certain point of endurance, beyond which flesh and blood can brook no additional ill usage. It is the infusion of the last drop that causes the cup to overflow. If the reader knew the many falsehoods which have been perseveringly propagated for the purpose of driving Unitarians beyond the pale of Christian charity, he would be disposed to pardon the perhaps improper warmth

with which I have expressed the indignation which I cannot help feeling. There are no principles too flagitious, no practices so profligate, as not to be ascribed to us; and ascribed without the least foundation. Thus it is, and thus it ever hath been. Religious persecutors have never failed to calumniate the objects of their rancour, and the victims of their tyranny. The primitive Christians were accused of holding secret meetings, at which they feasted on the flesh of mangled infants. Luther was said to be carried away by the Devil. All Presbyterians of the olden time had "black-roofed mouths." The aboriginal inhabitants of Ireland were disfigured by a preternatural elongation of the back-bone; and modern Unitarians crucify dogs in brutal derision of that blessed Being whom they acknowledge as their Lord and Saviour! The man who circulates, and who has probably fabricated this latter slander, professes to be actuated by the purest attachment to evangelical truth, and to have no other object in view than the glory of God, and the salvation of souls! Can any thing be more loathsome than such pharisaical canting!

"We shall rejoice," continues this sanctified defamer, "to find that those reports are unfounded; and it rests on the Genevese Pastors to give us the proof."—Does it indeed?—Good easy man!!—It rests on the accused to prove a negative!!—a thing which, under the circumstances of the case, you know right well it is impossible to do. You have not stated in the indictment, the day, the month, or the year, when the crime is alleged to have been committed; and you expect the persons arraigned to produce a witness, who will swear that he beheld them in the *very act of not doing it!!* Bring the case home to your own party. Suppose that some anti-Trinitarian should be so wicked as to fabricate defamatory stories respecting yourself, and some of your coadjutors—suppose that he were to talk about alliterative cognomina acquired at College,—about Orthodox divines dancing on the Bible—about contradictory accounts given by the same person, on different occasions, relative to "vehicular" modes of conveyance—or about indecent anecdotes, narrated immediately after an impassioned oration, urging the revival of religious purity. Suppose that, without any reference to dates, or concomitant circumstances, he were to propagate such

calumnies concerning orthodox members of Synod; do you think it would be reasonable, or fair, to call on the accused for positive disproof? Make the case your own; and say how you would relish such a demand as that which you have addressed to the Clergy of Geneva.

Sir,—these Gentlemen have done all that is possible. In denying the mitigated form of the charge, they have virtually denied the more aggravated; and it now rests on you and Mr. Brown to prove your infamous allegations.

Candour constrains me to acknowledge that you have not acted as Mr. Brown did. He gave no voucher for the tale about the infernal cry.—Whereas you have boldly stated your authority for that of the canine crucifixion. This latter act of impiety is, unquestionably, shocking in the extreme. That men, calling themselves disciples of Christ, should, nevertheless, be capable of committing a wanton and soul-sickening enormity, for the purpose of dishonouring their master, appears, on the first view of the case, to be highly improbable. But you say you have it from the lips of “A NATIVE SWISS.” Hearken to that, O ye perverse generation of gainsayers—hearken to that, and be dumb for ever.* However, it is matter of serious regret, that communication with this native Swiss did not happen to commence some years ago. How many orthodox anecdotes, which still continue apocryphal, might thus have been substantiated? How many, as yet unanswered calls for the grounds on which certain statements were made in open Synod, might have been answered at the

* My *serious* belief however is, that the “Native Swiss” is altogether a *fiction* personage; and that *he* and his story are solely and exclusively indebted for existence to the prolific brain of the Orthodox Presbyterian. That learned Gentleman must excuse my “honest doubts”—doubts in which he may be assured that the public participate. If he wish to establish his claim to the character of an honest man, and to remove from his door the disgraceful imputation of having wickedly calumniated a whole religious community, let him state in his next number the *name*, the *occupation*, and the *address* of the “Native Swiss”—together with the *time when*, the *place where*, and the *occasion on which* the information was communicated. These things I do hereby formally call on the Orthodox Editor to state.—If he do not—he brands himself, ‘a defamer.’

moment? When respectable individuals have been directly contradicted, and the *names* of their informants most uncivilly demanded, with what facility might they have extricated themselves from a most embarrassing situation, had they been acquainted with the Helvetian witness of all work?---For example---

Question. Pray Mr. A. B., or C. D., *by whom* were you informed, that teachers in the B. A. Institution, disregarding a solemn compact, have tampered, in some instances, with the religious principles of their pupils?

Answer. The fact was stated to me by—*A Native Swiss.*

Q. By whom were you informed, that a minister, long known to be a Unitarian, became a Trinitarian ere he died?

A. By a Native Swiss.

Q. By whom were you informed, that an orthodox minister, whilst in a state of intoxication, baptized a cat, which was presented to him as a child?

A. By a Native Swiss.

Q. By whom were you informed, of a fourth minister having declared from the pulpit, that the blood of Christ was of no more efficacy than the blood of a bullock?

A. By a Native Swiss.

Q. By whom were you informed, of a fifth minister's having said, from the same place, that it was rather hard the whole human race should be made liable to perdition, because an old man had taken it into his head to break an orchard and steal a few apples?

A. By a Native Swiss.

These, and similar statements, have been made in public Synod, and, though immediately contradicted, and the authority on which they rested most urgently demanded, that demand has not yet been complied with. How useful would the Swiss have been on all such occasions! Had he been at poor Mr. Magill's elbow when he was so sadly puzzled in Strabane and Lurgan, there would have been no necessity for a reference to a Noble Lord.

"It is no wonder," says *Ehud*, "that Unitarianism should flourish in Geneva, when the people are permitted to know the *arguments* only on *one side* of the question." Did this gentleman ever hear of the Unita-

rian ministers of this country having proposed to the Trinitarian, that the doctrines at issue between them should be amicably discussed in a joint publication, and the publication circulated amongst their respective flocks? And did he farther hear, that the Trinitarians had declined the offer on pretexts the most ridiculous?*

Ehud states, that Mr. Brown is doubtless prepared with his proofs. If so, he is imperatively called upon to produce them. He must give us the name and the address of his informant. Let him not think to escape us by skulking behind a man of straw.

I come now to the main point of the present communication. Whilst Mr. Brown is preparing to criminate the people of Geneva, he may at the same time make arrangements for vindicating himself from a charge, which it is my unpleasant duty thus publicly to prefer. With reluctance do I bring forward a business which must terminate in either his dishonour or my own. The minister of Aghadoey and the minister of Newtownlimavady cannot both come off with credit. One or other of them must retire from the field disqualified for the society of honourable men. If I fail to establish by evidence, the misdemeanor imputed, let shame and confusion of face be my doom: if I make it good, the penalty will fall heavy on the Rev. John Brown. The case cannot be well understood without a statement of some antecedent circumstances.

In defence of my religious sentiments, and for the preservation of my ministerial usefulness, I was obliged, upwards of two years ago, to deliver a regular series of discourses on the Trinitarian question. These discourses were attended by a considerable number of persons belonging to neighbouring congregations, and caused so much either well or ill founded alarm, that Mr. Brown and eight or nine other Orthodox clergymen deemed it expedient to unite their efforts, for the purpose of counteracting the baneful effect supposed to have been, in some instances, produced; and accordingly, they preached successively in the adjoining meeting-house of Druma-

* We might also ask, does this gentleman not know, that the Overtures of Synod *enjoin* certain doctrines to be taught *exclusively*; and that candidates for the Ministry cannot be received into that Body unless they promise to obey the injunction?—ED.

chose. Knowing that truth could never suffer from a collision with error, and having nothing but the interests of truth in view, I announced from my pulpit, that, on a certain day, these opposition lectures were to commence; earnestly urged my people to attend them; and said that I would facilitate their doing so, by curtailing our own morning services. In consequence of these circumstances, the principal part of the congregation regularly repaired to the adjacent place of worship.

It happened that in the very last of my controversial sermons, I had occasion to advert to the celebrated text concerning the three heavenly Witnesses; and endeavoured to show, that, admitting the disputed words to be genuine, they would by no means establish the doctrine in support of which they are usually adduced. I alleged, that all which could be fairly concluded from them was, that there subsisted between the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, a unity, not of substance or nature, but of testimony respecting a particular truth; such a unity as subsists between the three corresponding witnesses, the spirit, the water, and the blood, which are mentioned in the verse immediately following, as bearing attestation upon earth. In other words, such a unity of purpose and affection, as our Lord contemplated when he prayed that his disciples might be *one* with *him*, and with one another, *as* he was *one* with the Father. After trying to establish this point, I observed, that we have the highest authority for regarding the text in question, as an interpolation; and that it had been given up as spurious by Luther, Archbishops Newcome and Magee, by Porson, Wardlaw, the Quarterly Reviewers, and almost every modern Trinitarian having the slightest pretension to learning or candor. Above all, I relied on the authority of the orthodox and indefatigable Griesbach, who has expunged the controverted passage from his edition of the Greek Testament---an edition acknowledged by men of all sects, parties, and opinions, to be the nearest approach that has yet been made to the original purity of the Sacred Volume. Some of my auditors, who had been accustomed to see the repudiated verse brought triumphantly forth, on all occasions, as the grand palladium of Orthodoxy, were filled with astonishment, and began to propose queries to their ministers, which were more easily asked than answered.

Shortly after the period of which I speak, it became Mr. Brown's turn to preach in Drumachose; and, as usual, a considerable number of my hearers were in attendance. Some of them took notes; and on their concurrent testimony, and that of all other persons present with whom I have conversed on the subject, I do now deliberately affirm, that, in the course of his sermon, the Reverend gentleman expressed himself to the following effect:

"My friends, I know you have been lately told by a clergyman in this neighbourhood, who has been delivering a series of lectures against our blessed Saviour, that the text of the three heavenly Witnesses, in one of John's Epistles, is a spurious interpolation, and that it has been rejected as such by the learned Griesbach. But, my friends, what will you think of a system which can be supported only by falsehood; and what will you think of the *man who is capable of thus supporting it* when I assure you, as I now do, that Griesbach retains the text as genuine!"

The reader will readily conceive the effect produced by this bold and decided declaration. Mr. Brown did not say, I have been *told* so and so. No; the assertion was made as from personal knowledge, and without an *if*, or a *but*, or qualification of any kind. In the minds of many, it of course gave rise to a feeling highly to my disadvantage. Those persons in the neighbourhood who were most decidedly adverse to my religious views, had formerly given me credit for some integrity; but what would they now think? Here, they had against me, the positive testimony of an Orthodox Minister, whose name was in all the Churches; and besides, they had been taught to consider Unitarianism as a heresy so pestilential, that it could hardly fail to corrupt the soundest moral constitution. Several of my own hearers, who knew me to be incapable of intentional falsification, supposed that through a lapse of recollection I must have confounded Griesbach's rejection of one text, with the rejection of another; and it was not until I had produced the Professor's edition of the Testament, laid my finger on the passage from which the interpolated words are expunged, and pointed out an appendix consisting of twenty-three pages, in which the various authorities that constrained the learned author to give

up a verse which he was evidently desirous to retain, are enumerated at great length : it was not until I had done all these things, that even my friends were satisfied with regard to the truth of what I had stated. They could hardly bring themselves to believe, that, on such an occasion, and under circumstances peculiarly delicate, any Minister of the Gospel—any man not utterly lost to every principle of integrity, and every feeling of shame, would be capable of acting as Mr. Brown had deliberately done. By occasionally adverting to the matter in private company, I thought the injurious impression had been sufficiently counteracted. I now understand that this has not been the case. The calumny has found its way into places which the refutation has not reached ; and, as usual, falsehood has travelled too fast, and too far, for truth to overtake her. By some persons, I still continue to be regarded as a man, who, for the sake of supporting an abominable heresy, has attempted to take away from the words of the book of life, and stated a wilful falsehood to the people, whom he was under a solemn obligation to instruct. Thus circumstanced, I have no choice : I am compelled to take this public mode of wiping away the aspersion.

Mr. Brown, stand forth. You, Sir, are one of those men who lay claim to superior sanctity, and who miss no opportunity of inveighing severely against the real or supposed failings and errors of their brethren. On a particular occasion, you journeyed to a considerable distance, ostensibly for the purpose of supporting the Gospel—you entered the house of God—you prayed that you might be sanctified by divine grace, and guided in the way of all truth—and, having done so, you, presuming (and perhaps safely presuming) on the ignorance and prejudices of your audience, dared to propagate, from the holy ground on which you stood, a defamatory accusation—an accusation calculated to sully the respectability, impair the professional usefulness, and injure the temporal interest of a man who had never injured you ; and who, even if he had, was then placed in circumstances which might, at least, have procured for him a temporary forbearance. Misrepresentations emanating from you, and those who act with you, had raised against him and his creed, a flood of vulgar prejudice, which it was no easy matter to withstand. Whilst he was every

moment in danger of being borne down by the torrent, and whilst the result was yet doubtful, you stood on the bank, viewing his perilous condition with a smile of malignant delight. Instead of holding forth a hand of help to a brother struggling for life, you took deliberate aim, and flung at him a missile, with the malicious intent to paralyze his exertions. To speak without a figure—I accuse you, in the face of the community, I accuse you, of having made a false, foul, and unmanly attack on my integrity, when you ought to have confined yourself to the answering of my arguments. I accuse you of having made this attack in the hearing of persons whose good opinion you knew to be essential to my well-being; and of having done it when I was not present to offer either explanation or defence. This, Sir, is my charge, that, whilst the book of life was spread open before you, and perhaps occasionally pressed by your hand, I charge you with having stated an untruth, calculated and apparently intended to do me serious injury.

You even ventured to assure a country congregation, that the text of the three heavenly Witnesses has been retained by Griesbach; and that I had uttered from the pulpit what I must have known to be a falsehood, for the purpose of corrupting the word of God. But surely you will not have the hardihood to say the same things to the world; what, then, are you to do? Will you venture to deny that you made use of the expressions charged? If you dare to come forward with such a denial, the charge will be established by a weight of testimony that will crush you to the earth. If you do not come forward when thus called on, it will be as effectually established by the unequivocal testimony of your silence.

Utrum horum mavis accipe.

I am tempted to give a few additional specimens of the Orthodox lectures to which allusion has been made. The public ought to know something of our sayings and doings in this secluded district. “The barbarous Indian,” said Mr. Brown, at a late Synod, “darting from his lurking place—stabbing his unguarded foe to the heart, and then brandishing over him the blood-stained tomahawk, is but a faint emblem of the fiendish exultation with which the ferocious and soul-destroying Arians have gloated over the last convulsive workings

of their expiring victims." The tomahawk seems to be a favourite weapon of this peaceful minister of Aghadoey. "Down, down, they sink into the abyss of perdition," said another of the associated preachers, stretching his arms over the pulpit, and suiting the gesture of depression to the word.—It is hardly necessary to add, that Unitarians were the persons spoken of. A few weeks before the preacher last alluded to officiated in Drumachose, a very gratifying testimony of good will had been presented to me, by the respectable inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood of Newtownlimavady. The affair had no connexion whatever with religious opinions; and some members of orthodox congregations were its warm supporters. But kindness shewn, on any account, to an avowed Unitarian, was a thing not to be tolerated. Accordingly, after his sermon was concluded, the preacher addressed the people of Drumachose on this direful subject. Amongst other things, he declared, "that either in this world or the next, the Lord Jesus Christ would assuredly visit, with signal *marks of his displeasure*, every unrepenting individual who had contributed to the marks of esteem conferred on Mr. Porter." Gentlemen who utter such sentiments from the pulpit, ought to be neither surprised nor offended at seeing them in print. Modest individuals, who do good in remote corners, must not blush on finding it fame. It is only fair to add, that some of the lectures delivered in Drumachose, breathed a very different spirit from those of Mr. Brown, and the other gentleman quoted.

A copy of so much of this communication as relates to Mr. B.'s sermon, has been transmitted to that gentleman by post.

WILLIAM PORTER.

Newtownlimavady.

Intelligence.

On Wednesday, the 17th of March, (St. Patrick's day), a meeting of the friends of Unitarian Christianity was held in Dublin, for the purpose of forming an Irish Unitarian Christian Society. Though only one day's notice of the meeting had been given, the attendance was respectable and encouraging; and the interest manifested in its proceedings general and decided. James Stevelly, Esq. having been called to preside, Rev. Joseph Hutton opened the meeting with prayer. The prospectus recently opened by the originators of the Society, explanatory of their objects and the proposed means of accomplishing them, was read. After which,

Rev. Dr. Drummond said, that the day had at length arrived, to which his hopes had long been directed, when Unitarianism was to be recognised by its own name in the house of its own friends. That a system of doctrines so essential to clear views of religion, and so consonant to the whole tenor of Revelation, should be withheld from mankind, through timidity or indolence, was neither reasonable nor just. The whole course of God's miraculous Providence was a testimony to the truth and nature of the doctrine of the Unity of God. It formed the broad basis of the Jewish Revelation, and was urged on the Israelites with emphatic solemnity by the Prophet's words, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is One Lord." It was recognised and reinforced by Jesus, when he declared, "there is none good but one, that is God," and pervaded the whole substance of his teaching. It was reiterated by the Apostle of the Gentiles, for we have his memorable words, "to us there is but one God, the Father." It signified not that this tenet was admitted in words in the creeds of reputed Orthodoxy; the very language which admitted it cancelled the admission, and linked it to a doctrine with which it cannot co-exist; the notion of a Trinity, to the name and the conception of which the sacred volume was alike a stranger, directly tended, however explained, or rather bewildered, by theological verbiage and metaphysical figments, to restore the influence of polytheism; it was the doctrines of creeds and confessions which often usurped the reverence due to Holy Writ, but were at variance with its spirit, and devoid of its authority. In the resolution which he held in his hand, it was stated that Unitarians were called on to unite by the exigencies of the times. In order to judge of those exigencies, let his hearers look to the North of Ireland: Well did a Calvinistic Minister describe the spirit of his party, when he said that he "had rather see twenty Arian brethren deprived of house and home, than have one soul left in fatal darkness." But glorious were the achievements which this spiritual benevolence had recently effected;—this love of souls,—the thin disguise of malignity and hypocrisy. Secret whisperings and barefaced calumny, pulpit influence and the arm of secular power, any weapons and all weapons were employed in the holy warfare against, not heterodoxy, but the heterodox.

Dr. D. then described the late transactions at Greyabbey, with an energy which must have awakened a kindred indignation in every

generous hearer; and after reading, to the evident satisfaction of the meeting, the assurance contained in the postscript to the last Monthly Repository, of the sympathy of the English Unitarians with their persecuted brethren, he concluded by moving the following resolution :

“ That this meeting, conscientiously believing Unitarianism to be the doctrine of the Gospel, regards the formation of a bond of union among its professors in this country as important to the interests of pure Christianity, and required by the exigencies of the times.”

A. Carmichael, Esq. seconded the resolution. There were, he said, two volumes of religious truth open before mankind, both equally clear in their intimations, and in perfect harmony with each other,—the book of life and the book of nature. Let them be studied together, and they would prove reciprocal interpreters. Let the absurd notion be relinquished, that the creation can teach us little, and Revelation nothing but mystery. Let the treasures of each be fairly searched, and from each would come forth the sublime truth of the Divine Unity. Nor would those who should restore that doctrine to its supremacy confer a light blessing on mankind. It is a tenet which the Divine favour has ever followed, and to the worth of which even its enemies have borne a silent testimony. What are all their attempts to explain the Trinitarian theory? what their unions and metaphysical subtleties, but struggles to grope out of the darkness of their contradictory system, and approximate that luminous truth, whose light we are this day assembled to diffuse? Convinced that nothing short of this truth, no modification of it, however ingenious, was supported by the sanction of Scripture, or suited to the wants of man, Mr. C. cordially seconded the resolution.

Rev. James Armstrong said, that if the Society which was contemplated were to confine its efforts to the mere support of a speculative tenet, the good to be effected would be a poor return for the requisite expenditure of labour. Were it not that the doctrines which Unitarians rejected seemed to be as pernicious in their influence as they are defective in their evidence, the moral world might offer a better sphere for exertion than the thorny field of controversy. But the prevailing tenets of the day were, in his opinion, subversive of the moral influence of the Gospel, by disconnecting the conduct of this life and the rewards of another. He held in his hand a recognised standard of orthodoxy, which should be allowed to speak for itself. Mr. A. then read the delectable portion of the Westminster Confession of Faith, in which the doctrine of Election and Reprobation is unfolded; and quoted from the same high authority, the assurance, that the sins of the Saints rather promote than endanger their final salvation. Was it possible to deny that here was a direct encouragement to breaches of the moral law of God? Was this the Christian doctrine according to godliness? But perhaps he might be asked, had the fruits of this system corresponded with its promise? He thought they had not. While Scotland was under the influence of a national ministry, no people were more distinguished than the Scotch for uniform moral principle. Since the revival of rigid Calvinistic preaching among them, they had, he understood, fallen from

their noble eminence; and the records of crime in their country, once almost empty, now furnished much stern work to the hands of justice. And what had been the effect on the numbers and general prosperity of the Christian church? The better minds, who drank most deeply of the intellectual spirit of the age, were driven (to use the words of the prospectus) from an unintelligible faith to a cheerless infidelity. History exhibited the same results on a larger scale. So long as Christianity was taught in its sublime simplicity, its encroachments on the limits of barbarism and superstition were rapid; but when it had received from Heathen philosophy an infusion of mysticism, and from barbaric ignorance a spirit of savage fanaticism, it lost its principle of stability and health. Where now were the churches, once flourishing and prosperous, of Asia and Africa? Supplanted by a system of imposture which possesses nothing in common with them, but the doctrine of the Divine Unity. It would seem that the righteous Governor of the world, who protected this great truth of old by his Providence, upheld it still in his rule among the nations. Mr. A. was persuaded that a union among the professors of this great truth, would not only strengthen the courage of its too timid advocates, but gather together many who want but a little encouragement to bring their wavering minds to truth. He read letters from two different and distant quarters, wholly unknown to him, each recording a case in which Unitarian views had been adopted, through the unbiassed workings of solitary reflection, and applying for the sympathy and aid of others. He then proposed a resolution, declaratory of the duty of Unitarian Christians to counteract, as far as possible, the evil tendency of popular opinions, which have no foundation in Scripture, are subversive of its moral influence, and present the character of God in the most revolting light. On the resolution, some discussion arose. Mr. Ferguson was of opinion that it wore too hostile an aspect. He deprecated the spirit of controversy, and thought that it should be the object of the Society to circulate its own sentiments, without impugning those of other Christians. The resolution was withdrawn, and the following substituted:

“That in proposing such a bond of union, we are actuated, not by a mere attachment to any speculative opinion, but by the conviction that Unitarian Christians’ views have a powerful tendency to elevate the human character and secure to it the most benign influences of our Holy Religion.”

Mr. Bell, in seconding the resolution, said, that as far as individual experience went, he could bear his testimony to the superior power of Unitarian views to attract the soul towards its Infinite Father, and impart true peace of mind. He was grateful for having been led from the mazes of the popular faith, often so distressing to the sincere and reflecting, to the clear and impressive truths of Unitarian Christianity: he had learnt by an experience trying to the feelings of a human heart, yet not without a rich recompense of comfort, how bitter are the struggles of a solitary man, following his conscience, amid voices of disunion and discouragement, from a favoured to an unpopular creed. He felt how much those struggles

would be alleviated, if the enquirer knew that he did not stand alone; if in losing the religious esteem and companionship of relatives, the Christian mother and sister and brother were ready to receive him. He felt persuaded that the fears of the time would be banished, and the menaces of bigotry lose their power, if so faithful a band as he now saw around him were to gather round the Ark of Unitarianism, and encircle with their protection every approaching worshipper. With these feelings he hailed the formation of this Society, and anticipated from it the most cheering results.

Jos. Hone, Esq. said, that the formation of a Society having been determined on, it was now necessary to give it a name. The resolution which he held in his hand proposed the designation of "Irish Christian Society." It had been thought that the frequent charge of infidelity brought against Unitarians rendered it necessary for them distinctly to prefer their claim to the appellation of "Christians." He readily conceded to the scruples of others a point of such slight moment; but he was himself persuaded, that the candid and well-informed knew full well that we were Christians: and that no claim of ours, however frequently and emphatically repeated, would induce the ignorant and illiberal to think, and call us so. They could not afford to relinquish the persecution of names. He rejoiced in being called upon to forward, in conjunction with others, objects which for 40 years he had endeavoured to promote by unaided exertions of his own. He had been so often applied to for Unitarian publications, and had found such frequent means of circulating them in remote parts of the country, that he felt assured that an ample field, already ripe to harvest, lay before the Society. Nor would it want encouragement proportioned to its opportunities of doing good. The English, and, doubtless, the American Unitarian Societies, would lend a friendly aid. The eyes of liberal Christians of many parts of the world were upon us. Let their example and their wishes stimulate us to do our duty in a country, whose religious wants might well awaken all our energies. He concluded by moving the following resolution:

"That, accordingly, an Irish Unitarian Christian Society be now formed, to awaken sympathy and co-operation among Unitarians in this country; to distribute publications, both doctrinal and practical, inculcating just views of religion; to extend Unitarian Christian worship; to maintain the rights of conscience, and to effect any other objects which may from time to time appear conducive to the promotion of pure religion."

Mr. Porter (son of the Clerk of the Synod of Ulster) said, that he was surprised, on entering the room, by a request to support the resolution which had just been read. To what circumstance he was indebted for that honour, he was long at a loss to conceive.—Stranger as he was to public life, he had no tried powers of persuasion which could render him an effective advocate of a righteous but maligned cause; and unknown as he probably was to the majority of his hearers, he could not supply in weight what he wanted in eloquence; but the allusions which had been made to the religious convulsions in the North of Ireland had solved the enigma. He

was known to be connected by a tie of near relationship with one of those worthies who had there stood forth, amid much obloquy and with some worldly loss, the unshrinking professor of a persecuted faith ; and it was thought that within his heart there must be strung some filial chord respondent to the praises of those honest men. This was an appeal which he could not resist ; and he could no longer hold back from a task for which he was qualified by the merits of another, rather than his own. One object of the proposed Society was, "to awaken sympathy and co-operation among Unitarians in this country." The time had at length arrived when it was clearly expedient to form here some common nucleus, around which the scattered elements of Unitarianism might be concentrated. The reproach of apathy had long been cast upon us—perhaps not without some justice : it must be confessed, that we had been illiberal in the cause of liberality. It was not difficult to account for this ; but to explain, was not to justify. Rejoicing as we do, in the conviction, that involuntary error is no disqualification for the Divine acceptance, the eternal weal or woe of innumerable brethren does not plead with us in the cause of proselytism. But it is a cruel straining of this benevolent faith, to infer from it that a passive silence of opinion was our wisdom. Truths not essential, might be valuable ; mental and moral blessings might be vast, though not eternal ; and if Unitarians had any reason for their preference of their own views to those of others,—if they thought truth and error not matters of perfect indifference, they were called on by the plainest principles of philanthropy to impart to others what they prize themselves.—Another object of the Society was, "to distribute publications, both doctrinal and practical, inculcating just views of religion." He must preface his remarks on this topic, by dissenting from the objections which had been urged against controversy. He respected the Christian moderation which suggested them ; but he must think it an impracticable task to defend our own opinions without noticing, for the purpose of refuting, the notions which were their direct contradictions. It was well to shew forth the interest, beauty, and majesty of truth ; but few eyes would be attracted by the exhibition were it not set in graceful contrast with the deformities of error. The Gospel was a revelation of truth as well as peace ; and he did not think its Ministers forgetful of its pacific spirit, when they came forth as the soldiers of the cross, and, with the weapons of the spirit, contended for the faith once delivered to the Saints. He said, "the weapons of the spirit," and none other would their respected Ministers near him ever touch. They would scorn to employ the secret whisperings of slander, or to wield the flaming brand of human passion ; they would never have recourse to Episcopalian magistrates, and make up by the terrors of secular authority, what they want in spiritual strength. The Society proposed to employ tracts as its chief instrument of good, and no means of influence was so valuable. He felt a hereditary attachment to the sacred office ; he believed the influence of the pulpit, however enfeebled by the deficiencies of preachers and the indifference of hearers, to be still powerful and salutary ; and he always rejoiced to find that influence made subservient to the cause of truth, by being placed under the direction

of a noble and religious independence. He did not doubt that the course of lectures about to be delivered by the united Unitarian Ministers of Dublin would effect much good : but, after all, lessons of truth were most impressively breathed from the silent page in the passionless atmosphere of solitude. Books were mute monitors of wisdom, that could patiently wait for the moment of reflection, and teach, when men were most disposed to learn. They awakened in the closet less of the pride of resistance, than the voice of the living advocate might arouse within the church ; while their asperities injured less, their reasoning convinced more. Truth, to be found, must be sought ; and the sincere seeker would more often apply to the recorded wisdom of books than to the professional addresses of those whom he imagined to be interested partizans. Besides, a publication would go where the eloquence of the most gifted reformer never could be heard : and here, he trusted, would henceforth be the centre—a mighty heart, that would send forth, through the great aorta of the press, a life-stream of truth which should ramify to the remotest extremity of the religious system around, and revivify its wasting strength.

Rev. James Martineau proposed the following resolution :

“ That, while professing attachment to the principles of Unitarian Christianity, we prize yet more that privilege of free inquiry from the exercise of which they spring ; regarding it as the noblest prerogative of religious beings, we purpose in our language and our conduct fearlessly to use it for ourselves, and habitually to exercise it as the equal right of others ;—to resist every open encroachment, and protest against all secret influence, which may interfere with this boon from the God of Truth.”

In commenting on the resolution, he observed, that the right of free inquiry, though it had been a familiar topic of boasting since the era of the Reformation, was not yet understood. There were passages in the statute-books, doctrines in popular creeds, and a predominant spirit in the religious world, inimical to its exercise : and as long as the profession of any honest opinions is associated with feelings of guilt or shame—as long as any of the possible issues of investigation were threatened with evil consequences, temporal or eternal,—as long as the inquirer was made to feel that at every step of his progress the cold eye of suspicion was on him, and that the sincerity of his professions would be estimated by the orthodoxy of the result—so long the rights of conscience did not receive a practical recognition. The very leaders of the Reformation, who just prepared the claim of freedom for the human mind, carried the long-endured habits of tyranny into their emancipated colony of Christianity ; and the gifted and powerful soul of Calvin was overshadowed by a dark act of ecclesiastical murder. The principle of free inquiry was not understood by the violent partizan of a system, who could not distinguish between knowledge and opinion, who mistook his own dogmatic confidence for the dictates of God's spirit, and the stupid inflexibility of a creed, for the immutability of truth. Men of this kind were seldom very scrupulous in their use of means to promote their favourite cause. Instead of a friendly proffer of

evidence, they often employed hostile acts of annoyance. It was a mistake to suppose persecution extinct, when its hateful fires of death had been extinguished, and its iron rod dropped from the hands of public justice. Its form, indeed, was changed; its slumbering embers were still awake in the bigot's heart—its iron still driven into the soul. The vocabulary of theological result, the covert imputation, the charge of singularity, the sneer of derision, the affectation of pious horror, the Pharisaic avoidance which insulates the heretic—the 1000 acts which render it unpleasant to profess the honest convictions of the mind, constitute a species of private persecution, often sufficiently malignant in its authors, and corroding to the peace of its victim, to grace the records of the Inquisition. The spirit of system not only interfered with the liberty of others, by disposing men to petty persecution, but made slaves of its own friends by impeding the full and free action of the mind, and constraining it into accordance with the ponderous evolutions of a sect. It effaced the delicate hues of individual sentiment, and melted them down into the broad and vulgar glare of party colour. It destroyed that individual energy of conscience on which all excellence of character was based, and sunk men into mere passive portions of the great machine of social life, without any separate spring of motion, when detached from the moving mass. He trusted that the Society now formed, would afford a noble example of union without bigotry, and moderation without imbecility; that however attached to Unitarian Christianity, it would so highly appreciate conscientious research, as to prefer the errors of the enquiring, to the truths of the blind partizan. The principle of free inquiry was not understood by the lukewarm enemy to all controversy. The objections to it stated in that room flowed, he believed, from a real, though mistaken tenderness for others. But he was always sorry to hear such statements, because they gave countenance to those who covered a disingenuous fear of man, under the guise of charity. He loved not the charity of the man who was tender to his own ease and popularity, and careless of the interests of the human mind. He loved not the affected zeal for practical morality, that would perpetuate it by silent demoralizing systems of error. He could not admire that earnestness for the devotional characteristics of Christianity which could suffer the shades of misconception to deepen around the character of God, and hide his most attractive attributes. Men little knew the injury they did in checking controversy or changing its natural course. Free discussion and free enquiry were kindred rights; their promise was written on the same page in the charter of human freedom, and the rude hand that would tear away the one, would inevitably cancel the other. Who would have the heart to maintain a solitary search after truth in the closet, if he might not pour out his discovered treasures on the world? Here and there, perhaps, a philosopher may be carried forwards by the self-feeding energy of a speculative mind, but the great mass of useful labourers in the field of knowledge depend on the stimulus of a social nature; and would abandon the search as selfish, if compelled to warp themselves up in the lonely enjoyment of their own convictions. He thought it a contradiction to talk of defending our own sentiments without alluding to those of others. Let any one try to adduce the evidence for the personal unity of God and the scriptural doctrine of reconciliation, without meddling with the doctrines of the Trinity or vicarious sacrifice. What line of argument could he follow? At every step the opinions which he rejected would rise up and contradict him, and explain away his explanations. And even if he did establish his point

what had he effected? In what state would be the mind of his convert? A mere store-house of contradictions, where truth and error look each other in the face, and neither could raise an arm to dislodge the other. The fact was, that in the process of enquiry, the detection of error was antecedent to the developement of truth; and in the progress of discussion it must be the same. Unitarianism in particular was driven into this course, for it contemplated Christianity as having been lost amid corruptions which had gathered round it; its office was to restore old truth, by removing its incumbrances; not to strike out into some new track. The fabric of Gospel truth, like the buried temples of Egypt, had been lost under the accumulated dust of ages; and the incumbent part must be removed ere the immortal structure could stand forth to the view in its grandeur of proportion, or its secret recesses be accessible to the worshipper.

But why, it might be asked, connect with the formation of a Unitarian Society, an express recognition of the principles of religious liberty, which are not Unitarian, but Protestant? Had Unitarianism any right to set itself up as their privileged advocate? He thought it had. It did not send men out on the wide field of investigation, point out to their free choice its thousand diverging roads, and then compel them, under peril of damnation, to meet at one only goal of orthodoxy. It was idle in any church to talk of enquiry being free within its pale, while it suspended the worst of all evils over all possible issues of enquiry but one: and were this the system of the Scriptures, he would pronounce them the foes to thought, close a volume which so cruelly invited a destructive curiosity, and hide himself from forbidden light beneath the broad shadow of infallible authority. A faith, then, which acknowledged the innocence of involuntary error, was the only faith that admitted of full freedom of enquiry; and this was a peculiar characteristic of Unitarianism. Never let Unitarians either abandon or abuse the liberty which they thus enjoyed. Let them remember that God made truth what it is, and will take care of its consequences; and let them limit the law of Christian sincerity by no calculations of temporal expediency; let them indeed strip controversy of its more revolting and earthly features; discarding the bitter sarcasm, the sneer of scorn, the boast of victors, and all such vulgar weapons from the armoury of truth; let them be content with the proposal of evidence, in the spirit of that charity which rejoiceth in truth. Let the enquirer and the teacher keep their eye steadily fixed on the Scripture, make it their single object to learn and communicate what they contain; let them utterly forget that there are any inspectors of their conduct, any judges of their words, except God and their own consciences; and he was satisfied that truth and charity would spread together, and more union be produced among the too widely dispersed portions of the Christian world, than any timid mediators, striving to be all things to all man, would ever be able to effect.

Mr. Drennan rejoiced, that at that late hour of the meeting little remained for him to say, more than to express his heartfelt sympathy with the spirit of the last resolution. It was cheering to see the dispersed strength of a righteous cause at length gathered together—singly we might be weak, but united we should be strong. He thought it required no sanguine spirit of prophesy to foresee great accessions to the strength of Unitarianism in this country. The chain of persecution which had encircled the Roman Catholic Church, had no longer its powerful tie of honour, with which to bind down to their service reflecting and generous minds. He could not help believing that many such minds would find in Unitarianism a welcome refuge. Let its gates be open to receive them.

The following Gentlemen were chosen a Committee for the present year :
 —Rev. Jos. Hutton, Jas. Armstrong, Dr. Drummond, Jas. Martineau :
 Jones Stevelly, T. Wilson, A. Carmichael, Jos. Hone, John Armstrong,
 R. M. Peile, R. Ball, W. Drennan, Henry Hutton, D. Hutton, —
 Sheil, — Porter, John Ferguson, B. M., Esqrs.—President, Jones
 Stevelly, Esq.—Treasurer, T. Wilson, Esq.—Secretary, Rev. Jas. Mar-
 tineau—Auditors, John Armstrong, Esq. and Jos. Hone, Esq.

Lectures.

We rejoice to observe the exertions that the friends of liberal views of religion are every where making to disseminate their opinions. Our readers will see the subjects of a series of lectures now in the course of delivery in this town, with the Preachers' names, &c., advertised on our cover. In Dublin, a similar course of lectures has been going forward since the 21st of March, comprising many important subjects of controversy. We have seen Dr. Drummond's first discourse, being the introduction to the series, and we cannot recommend it too highly. We intend to treat our readers, in our next number, to a short passage. At Moneyrea, near this town, a course of thirteen lectures was commenced on the 17th of January, and will terminate on the 19th of December. In all these places, these discourses have hitherto excited very great interest, and have been attended by great numbers of respectable and attentive hearers. Much good has been done in other countries by such means; and we have no doubt but the learned and respectable Divines of the North and South, now engaged in directing the attention of the public to such important subjects, will disseminate much useful information.

Correspondents.

We must again apologize to our respected Correspondents, particularly Q.—G. F. and X. Y. Z., for not being able to insert their valuable favours in this month's publication. Several communications have been received, and shall meet with due attention. We request that all articles intended for early insertion, may be forwarded before the 14th of each month.

Communications, free of expense, to be forwarded to the Editors, care of Mr. SAMUEL ARCHER, Bookseller, High-street, BELFAST; who will likewise receive *Subscriptions* for the Work, and who will have *Advertisements* inserted on the cover on the following moderate terms :—a few lines, 4s.—half a page, 6s.—and a whole page, 8s.

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VOL. I.

Thoughts on the recent dissensions in the Presbyterian Church in this Country.

LETTER I.

IN religious pursuits there would seem to be periods of calmness, and periods of excitement; and each, no doubt, in its turn, has its uses and its disadvantages. The time of the Reformation was remarkable for one of the most important struggles that ever took place in Europe; and the question at issue was, whether men should be permitted to exercise the undoubted privilege of their rational nature, or sink overwhelmed by a vile and degrading superstition. This great and necessary convulsion had indeed been preceded by a long calm, which, like the serenity of stagnant waters, served to conceal the corruption that lay beneath its surface.

When this important contest was ended, various minor discussions took place; and men who had but recently been permitted to exercise their freedom, occasionally abused their privileges, and ran into dangerous extremes. Yet still the rights which they had vindicated, were invaluable; and the dissensions to which they sometimes gave rise, were merely like a passing storm in the natural world, which, though often afflictive in its course, serves many highly important ends.

The most violent of these dissensions in the Presbyterian Church, in this country, took place about a century ago, when men, equally distinguished for their talents and their worth, were compelled to withdraw from the general Body, because they refused to subscribe their unfeigned assent to the Westminster Confession of Faith, or any other creed, drawn up by weak and erring men like themselves—taking the Holy Scriptures as the only rule of their faith and practice, and refusing to receive, as sacred “doctrines, the commandments of men”

The intolerant enactments which drove from the bosom of the General Synod of Ulster, men whose memories will be fondly cherished, whilst Presbyterianism exists in our land, were at length quietly suffered to fall into oblivion. For more than fifty years the practice of that Church was liberal and indulgent: subscription to the ancient standard of Orthodoxy was not enforced—men entertaining different views of its doctrines, met as brethren, and lived together in peace. The people under their ecclesiastical authority, chose, amidst this variety of opinion, Ministers of whose doctrines and lives they approved; and the whole Body, united together by the same discipline, presented the pleasing view of a great religious community, when each one conformed himself to the general rules of his church, without being restrained in the exercise of his individual judgment, as to his mode of interpreting Sacred Scripture; but bound to yield implicit obedience to those moral laws which are of indispensable and universal obligation—whilst all lived together in the exercise of that forbearance and charity which became the disciples of Jesus.

The scene is now indeed completely changed. All the connexions and intimacies of early life which we are wont to recal with unmingled satisfaction, amid the cares and troubles of the world, have been utterly forgotten: the friendships founded upon them, have been dissolved: and the public assemblies of the Presbyterian Church, (which once afforded an opportunity to those who had been widely separated of meeting together; of preserving their old attachments; and differing, as they unavoidably did, on various points, yet cordially agreeing to promote the general good, and to preserve unimpaired those sacred bonds of affection which united them:) now present us with an afflicting contrast. Instead of brethren, as formerly, “dwelling together in unity,” we have witnessed dissensions and recriminations that are painful to every well disposed mind; and which must afford matter of rejoicing and triumph to the enemies of our faith. It is in vain that the advocates of toleration and religious liberty have alleged the long established practice of the General Synod of Ulster, in allowing freedom of opinion on those questions about which some of the wisest and the best of men have differed; in vain have they pleaded that in firm reliance on the inviolability of this great

principle, they became members of that Body; in vain have they contended, that all endeavours which have hitherto been employed to produce uniformity of doctrine, have signally failed; in vain have they reminded their opponents of the peace which they have enjoyed, and of the manifold evils which their decisive courses were likely to bring upon individuals, and ultimately upon their Church—all these considerations have been given to the winds—and in the violence of the present unhallowed excitement, those assuming to themselves the exclusive title of *Orthodox* have, like the intolerants of former days, driven from amongst them men of whom they are not worthy.

Every engine too has now been employed to call forth the violent passions of a bigotted and ignorant multitude; and men who have kept a conscience, have been exposed to obloquy and inconvenience, and suffering. All the usual courtesies of life have been forgotten—the breach has been made wider by base attempts, through misrepresentation, to separate Ministers from the affections of their people. In many instances, families have been divided in the unhallowed strife; and the separation has been caused, of those who were once bosom friends. That the all-wise and all-gracious Power who presides over mortal affairs, and controls and directs human passions, will so order events as to bring good out of these great evils, is not to be doubted; yet they who have caused such divisions in the Church, and so much unmerited suffering to their brethren, have incurred a heavy responsibility.

The Ministers of the General Synod, whose illiberal proceedings have led to the exclusion of many worthy men from their communion, have evidently been actuated by very different views. That there are members who from the prejudices of early education, operating upon ardent and enthusiastic minds, are fully persuaded that, by reviving the intolerant enactments of distant times, they are doing God service, cannot, I think, be questioned. “I bear them record, that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.” When men have once adopted the notion that they are the peculiar favourites of heaven—that they are under the immediate and sensible influence of the Divine Spirit, it is very natural for them to feel a little vain of their pre-

eminence—to be lifted up with spiritual pride ; and to regard with contempt and dislike, those who have not reached to such high attainments. But those men who are carried beyond the bounds of common sense by the wanderings of their imaginations, are often very harmless members of society ; and as the excitement gradually subsides, they ere long begin to think and act like other men. In the present state of the world, this feverish kind of religion cannot endure, and must in time become sobered down into something more rational ; and perhaps, in the end, may retain a little of the primitive ardour, without the intolerance by which it is now characterized.

Amongst the supporters of their uncharitable measures towards their brethren, I have no difficulty in believing that there are many secretly attached to what are usually called *heterodox* opinions ; but who have not the firmness, nor the honesty, to make such an avowal ; and who join in the general outcry, lest they should themselves be suspected. It will be found by consulting experience, that when the popular current has set in strongly in favour of peculiar opinions, the temptation to follow the multitude, and to imitate their intolerance, often becomes too powerful for human resolution. To attempt reasoning with the bulk of mankind, when their passions are excited, is usually like beating the air. And there is perhaps no subject that calls forth the same violence amongst the ill-informed, as that of religion. It seems to rouse every evil principle within the breast ; and that which should diffuse a sacred calm over the agitated mind, and pour oil on the troubled waters, is so totally misunderstood, so perverted and abused by the weakness and the sinfulness of man, as to be made a pretext for deeds the most unholy. It is not then to be wondered at, that under the influence of such terrors, numbers should be found feeble, irresolute, and wavering, and ultimately overpowered by a temptation that so forcibly assails the infirmities of our nature. When the means of support are made to depend on the adherence of men to a certain set of opinions : when they are exposed to the chance of being thrown upon a cold and unfriendly world, perhaps with a numerous and helpless family entirely dependent upon them—incapacitated for entering on any other of the various pursuits

of life—declining, it may be, into the vale of years, and their locks beginning to silver with the hand of time ; need we be surprised that, in such circumstances, numbers should be found temporizing ; casting a veil of darkness and mystery around their opinions, and expressing themselves on controverted questions, in words of scripture, to which *they* affix one meaning, and their *hearers* another. Thus ignorance and prejudices are fostered ; and the pure and simple truths of the Gospel are never taught plainly nor with effect. The temptations to this kind of insincerity, for I cannot and will not call it by a softer name, are so numerous and powerful ; it holds out such a prospect of tranquillity to him who adopts it ; whilst the opposite course is sure to involve him, in the first instance, in manifold difficulties, that the wonder is, not that so many have fallen into the snare, but that almost any can be found who have had the firmness to resist and to hold fast their integrity.

There is still another class of men amongst the intolerants of the General Synod of Ulster, who ought not, even in a hasty sketch like the present, to be passed over without notice ; I mean those who, from whatever motive, have renounced those opinions which they once either openly or covertly favoured, and have led the van in the crusade against those who have continued to adhere to them. The violence of recent converts to any cause has long since become proverbial. Whether this arises from the warmth of newly awakened zeal, or from an anxiety to remove all doubt on the minds of others as to their present sincerity, cannot always be ascertained. But when we find instances of men, who have for a series of years, by the whole tenor of their conversation, though perhaps not by any public declarations, advocated what are usually called *New Light opinions* ; who have chosen as their intimate companions those who avowedly entertain those views ; and afterwards, when the prejudices of the people have been roused, by various causes, against such principles, have been suddenly converted from moderation into intolerance, have cheered on, and swelled the popular outcry—have dissolved all their former intimacies—have forgotten unnumbered former obligations, and, as far as in them lay, have delivered up to the fury of an ignorant mob, their early associates, their benefactors, and their friends

—what are we to think of a system which demands such a sacrifice : or of those who would bind their victims, and offer them on such an unhallowed altar ?

I leave such men with the mingled emotions of pity and of scorn, to the admonitions of their own consciences, and gladly turn from their oppressors to the oppressed. It is refreshing to the spirit, when wearied with the bigotry and cold-heartedness, and hypocrisy of mankind, to find such an *oasis* in the desert, such a green spot, on which the eye rests with pleasure. The little band of virtuous confessors, who in these times have stood forward, the intrepid advocates of religious freedom, have, I trust, earned for themselves a reward far above this world's censure or its praise. It has been my lot to mark the trials which some of them have endured ; the struggles between human feeling, and a sense of duty ; and the final triumph of religious and moral principle.

Mere popular favour is a good so easily gained, and so easily lost, that no man of understanding will either make it the rule of his actions, or allow the want of it to destroy his peace. Yet, on the other hand, it must undoubtedly be a very high gratification, to be cheered and encouraged in the discharge of ministerial duties, by the friendly co-operations of those for whose benefit they are intended. Nor can I conceive of any thing more delightful to the heart of a Minister of the Gospel of Jesus, than to find himself surrounded by an affectionate people, who are pleased with his labours—amongst whom he lives as a father, a brother, or a friend ; and where mutual esteem, fostered and cherished by unnumbered acts of good will, forms a bond of union which neither time nor change should dissolve. To find thus, from happy experience, “ the pleasure of the Lord prosper in his hand,” is indeed a reward that will more than repay him for many an anxious hour. Yet these sad times have often severed such holy ties, and broken many a link in the chain of affection. Instead of the kindly feeling with which his toils were lightened, when mingling with his flock in all the intercourse which their mutual relations naturally produce, the worthy Minister now often meets with a cold and repulsive manner, a distant and averted look ; and finds that the happy interchange of good offices and friendly affections, has entirely ceased. These are trials which must weigh

heavily on every mind endued with the least sensibility—this is that bitterness of the heart with which a stranger, such as I am, cannot intermeddle. But it is the duty of all who are friends to the rights and privileges of our common nature, whatever may be their peculiar religious creeds, to aid those who in this unhallowed contest are persecuted for righteousness' sake; to cheer them by their countenance; and to alleviate their sufferings by their sympathy—"remembering them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being ourselves also in the body."

X. Y. Z.

ON ORIGINAL SIN.

IN the Third number of THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN, I presented the reader with a paper on the Trinity—I now wish to lay before him a few observations on the doctrine of Original Sin, the second of the Synod of Ulster's prescriptive doctrines.

What is the meaning of Original Sin? Is it that we are individually guilty of Adam's transgression; or, are we sinners in abeyance,—before we are born,—prior to consciousness?—Are we charged with a crime before we are able to commit one—condemned before our trial—sentenced before we are capable of moral action,—before we can discern between good and evil? Does Original Sin imply, that man, when he first breathes the air of Heaven, is merely a personified peccadillo—a sin incarnate? Does it mean that an infant is a very serpent—that the smile of innocence which plays round its lips, is only lent to betray—that the poison of asps is under its tongue? It means all this, or nothing. What say the Westminster Divines on this subject? How read we in their Catechism, which the Synod of Ulster has sanctioned and devoted particularly for the use of children?

"All mankind by the fall, lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever."

Great and Beneficent Father of the Universe: and is it thus that Ministers of the Christian religion abuse thy offspring? Is it thus they malign thee? And is it

possible that this unhallowed extract forms one of the first lessons that are instilled into the unsuspecting and confiding minds of innocent and amiable children! Oh! it is no wonder that children become revengeful and malignant, when they are taught that God is so unkind! It is no wonder that the mind of youth and even of manhood often becomes wayward and reckless, when it imagines, from early and deep impressions such as the above, that this bright world with all its blessings is only a foul deception, and that an awful and irrespective curse—a *wrathful* doom involves the loveliest and the noblest works of God!

This doctrine of Original Sin leads directly to *materialism*,—and thus in many cases to *infidelity*.—I ask, and every inquiring Christian will ask, is it possible that an infant can have sin? What is an infant? It is a thing in which the germ of a mighty mind lies folded up. That germ, pure and uncontaminated by mortal touch, has been planted in it by the hand of its creator. The infant's corporeal constitution may have descended from Adam "by natural generation," as the divines would say; but the soul, "ethereal principle," is not of human origin; it comes not "by natural generation:" else the soul is *material*. There is just this dilemma;—either the soul came from Adam by ordinary descent, *stained by sin*, and is therefore *material*; or it came immediately from God, *pure and unsullied*, and is therefore *spiritual* and immortal. Let the Calvinist meet this dilemma if he can.

We shall analyze the Calvinistic dogma in reference to Original Sin. "All mankind by the fall lost communion with God!" This assertion is as contrary to fact—as opposed to the history of Heaven's dispensations—as the denial of Providence itself. It is absolutely inconsistent with that intercourse which every christian enjoys, when he unbosoms himself in secret to the Being that made him. Do Calvinists mean to say that man has no connexion with heaven until *conversion* takes place? Will they affirm that God holds no correspondence with his rational offspring *in a state of nature*? But how is *conversion* from a *state of nature* effected in the Orthodox way? Must not the Holy Spirit commune with the soul? Must not divine grace operate on the hard and sinful heart? Must not all this be done

prior to conversion? Here *communion* is commenced on the part of God. He begins the overture, and if *conversion* be a tedious matter, *during all this time*, he communicates with a child of Adam, *lying in original and actual sin!* Away with such inconsistency. If the circular mode of reasoning be adopted, and if it be said that man must "*pray for grace to help his infirmity;*" then I ask, what encouragement does Calvinism give for *prayer?* If the *natural man* be told that there is no "*communion with God,*"—that, in his *unconverted* state, there is *no access* to the presence of that Being before whom he should make his wants known,—why should he ply Heaven with his vain petitions?

"All mankind are under his wrath and curse!" The man who could live, and eat, and drink, and look upon the light of Heaven, and subscribe to this clause, would be guilty of the foulest, blackest ingratitude:—he would be—

"Fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils;
"The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
"And his affections dark as Erebus:"

Such a man would slander his father.

Were it possible that God could have kindled into *wrath*, so as to *curse* his creatures, He had means as rapid as omnipotent, to gratify an *infinite passion*: But now, the very circumstance that God bears with the world—that He crowns it with rich blessings, is a demonstrative proof that He is not altogether so displeased with it, as Divines find it their interest to represent Him. The simple fact, which I believe no Christian will deny, that there is more happiness than misery in existence, is a certain evidence, that man is not that *wrath-stricken* and *cursed* creature described in creeds and confessions. Then why should ministers of Religion inculcate such a system of *terror*? Why should they represent men by nature "as bond slaves to Satan"?—I perfectly agree in sentiment with a passage which I met with the other day: "It is obvious," says the writer, "that a religion of *terror* is much more favourable, and especially profitable, to priestly ambition, than any other. The fear of the Devil opens some men's purse-strings much wider than the love of God ever would."

"All mankind, by the fall, are made liable to the pains of hell forever"! Sweeping and overwhelming

conclusion ! Then what becomes of the youth who dies before *conversion* ? Affectionate fathers, shudder for your children ! What becomes of the babe that is taken from the cradle to the tomb ? Fond mothers, tremble for your infants ! Were I a woman, and a Calvinist, I would not run the risk of producing a being that might die in a *state of nature*, and thus “ *be liable to the pains of hell forever.* ” No—not for worlds ! I would not nurse a thing that is under the *wrath* and *curse* of God.

“ But let us leave to the Trinitarians their angry deities.” Let us hear what the Scriptures say on this momentous subject. Solomon, the wisest of men, observes, “ Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made *man upright* ; but *they* have sought out many inventions.” The term *man* is here used in its widest sense, and means mankind. This is obvious, not only from the indefinite form in which it occurs, but also from the pronoun *they* being used in reference to it, in the latter member of the sentence. Solomon then asserts that God hath made, not merely the first man, but man indefinitely, *upright*. If it be argued that David his father has said something apparently contradictory to this, I reply, that David only speaks of his own particular case : “ Behold, *I* was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my *mother* conceive *me* : ”—and there may have been circumstances connected with David’s history, concerning which he hath the best right to be informed : but after all he does not speak of iniquity being inherent in himself ; it is in reference to matters prior to his birth, and connected with other agents.

The proverb “ that the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and that the children’s teeth are set on edge,” is as untrue under the Christian dispensation as under the Mosaic. The Most High God has entered His protest against it, and sealed that protest by an appeal to his own *immutable* existence. How does Ezekiel write ? “ As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold all souls are mine : as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine : the soul that sinneth *it* shall die.”

What were the opinions of the blessed Jesus with regard to Original Sin ?—It seems not to have formed any part of his system. He knew human nature well ;

and he appears to have taken almost for granted that there was such a thing as *purity of heart* in the world. "Blessed (said he) are the *pure in heart*, for they shall see God."—"Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."—"Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become *as little children*, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." This portion of Scripture plainly teaches, that *unconverted* persons are *unlike* little children—and that, by becoming *like* them, they are qualified to enter into the kingdom of heaven. How can all this be reconciled with the Calvinistic notion of original sin? If little children were depraved and guilty, the Saviour could not have wished men to become like them.

Christian parents! Your children then are pure and unsullied when they are placed in your hands. Justice could not give them to you exalted by virtue: Mercy could not deliver them to you deformed by vice. True, they are fallible: but they are also susceptible of much good. It is yours to train them in the way they should go—to educate them for a happy immortality.

Then what is the state of the case? The Scriptures inform us, that "*the son shall not bear the iniquity of the Father.*" We have thus the testimony of the prophets—of Solomon—of one greater than Solomon,—even Christ:—we have the solemn oath of Almighty God, that the doctrine of hereditary guilt is nothing more or less than a superannuated "proverb"—an opinion dangerous, as it is revolting and calumnious. We have thus the universe against the Calvinistic doctrine of Original Sin.

A BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

A STRIKING LIKENESS.

THE Calvinistic Church of Ulster bears a very strong resemblance to the Mother Church of Rome. In tracing out the lines of resemblance, however, I do entreat my much loved friends, my R. C. countrymen, to pardon me for selecting out of their doctrines, the most exceptionable tenets, and also for comparing *their Church*, to one that is in a rapid decline.

1st. The first feature that I shall here take notice of, is a love of mystery.

Though Mystery is one of the names given in Revelation, to Babylon, which is generally considered an Apostate Church; yet do both these Churches carry this love so far, as to prefer the mystical exposition when a favourite dogma is to be established, though in all other cases, they prefer the simple and obvious meaning. The Church, for instance, as well as the Bread and Wine, is called in Scripture the body of Christ; but yet the Roman Catholics believe their church to be his body, only in a *figurative* sense; though they believe the bread and wine to be, by the prayer of the priests, transubstantiated into the *REAL* body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ.

Just so the Calvinistic Church consider the oneness of the disciples of God, prayed for by the Redeemer, and the oneness of Paul and Apollos to be *figurative*, not sameness of substance, but oneness of purpose, spirit, and affection; while they consider the oneness of the Father and the Son to be *literal*, oneness in substance, equality, in power and glory, though the disciples' oneness with the Father is declared to be the *same* as that of the Father and the Son. They also hold the self-contradictory doctrine of three Almightyies being one Almighty. In the love of self-contradictory mystery, then, the two churches are exactly similar.

2d. Another striking likeness we shall find in their authoritatively declaring what are the articles of faith, that are *essential* to salvation, and in their denouncing those that differ from them in their religious opinions, as on the high road to perdition. Both churches agree in considering the Trinitarian doctrine to be *one* of the essentials; though in no part of the scriptures declared to be so. Indeed, it is acknowledged by an eminent Trinitarian writer, to be a doctrine of *inference* and *deduction*, and *not* a doctrine of revelation.

3d. The two churches also agree in imposing on the members of their communion, tests and creeds made by fallible men, to *mend* the *perfect* work of God, by tenets and expressions not to be found in the word of God.

4th. They also resemble each other in virtually assuming infallibility. Though this is disclaimed by the Calvinists in words, yet is it acted upon by them in their

attempts to dictate in matters of faith, and in their arrogant denunciation of those who refuse to submit to this dictation, as if they *exclusively* knew the mind of the Spirit, the true meaning of the Scriptures.

5. Thus the Calvinists do evil, that good may be the result. Herein I believe they surpass their R. C. countrymen, who deny what their enemies report of them, viz. that they consider all means fair and justifiable, that promote the interests of their church.

Their candidates for the Ministry, the Calvinists examine, and *confess*, with locked doors; and question them regarding the *secularity* or *spirituality* of their views in entering on the ministerial office. These features of similarity will no doubt receive a finishing stroke from the brush of absolution, that they have *in retentis*, in the 30th chapter of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

Q.

THE SYNOD OF ULSTER AND THE PRESBYTERIAN.

THE Presbyterian acknowledges no *human* head to his Church: and believes that the Ministers of it are all of *equal authority*. The Synod *acts* in direct opposition to these fundamental principles, by submitting to the dictation of *a few*; and by tamely yielding its neck to the yoke of a faction.

The Presbyterian believes that the Holy Scriptures are *all sufficient*, as a rule of faith and practice. The Synod, *negatively* at least, maintains their *insufficiency*, since, in addition to them, it requires, and *enforces*, the aid and support of human creeds, tests, declarations of belief, confessions of faith, examination committees, &c. &c., and cannot even express its creed in the *language* of the Bible.

The Presbyterian *claims* the right of private judgment for himself, and grants the same privilege to every individual of the human race, capable of thought and reflection—allows every man to read, and to think for himself, and to choose his own path on the journey to immortality; and believes that he is accountable to God *alone* for his religious sentiments. The Synod *virtually denies* all this, for it prescribes to its members, if not their thoughts, at least their words; makes them ac-

countable to *it* for their belief, and has the arrogance to talk of "*probing their hearts*;" apparently forgetting that the power of doing so belongs to a higher Being than *man*.

The Presbyterian believes that the people have a *right* to choose their own teachers—the Synod will not grant this, in its connexion, but *insists* that *Calvinists alone* must be chosen. The Presbyterian, feeling that he is a frail, erring mortal, has not the presumption to assume infallibility—the Synod must have assumed this attribute, since it pretends to know *exactly* those doctrines which are *true*, and those which are *false*.

AN ELDER'S SON.

SCRIPTURE ITS OWN INTERPRETER.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 185.)

2 COR. i. 3.—“Blessed be God *even the Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort.”

— 19.—“the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us,” &c.

— 21.—“Now he which stablisheth us with you in *Christ* and hath anointed us, is *God*.”

— ii. 14.—“Now thanks be unto *God*, which always causeth us to triumph in *Christ*.”

— 15.—“For we are unto *God* a sweet savour of *Christ*.”

— 17.—“but as of *God*, in the sight of *God*, speak we in *Christ*.”

— iii. 4.—“And such trust have we through Christ to Godward.”

— iv. 4. “lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, *who is the image of God*, should shine unto them.” (See also v. 6.)

— 14. “Knowing that he which *raised up the Lord Jesus*, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.”

— v. 18—21.—“And *all things are of God*, who hath reconciled us to himself by *Jesus Christ*, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.—Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God: For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

— ix. 13.—“they glorify *God* for your professed subjection unto the Gospel of *Christ*.”

— xi. 31.—“*The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.”

2 COR. xii. 19.—“ We speak before *God*, in *Christ*.”

—— xiii. 4.—“ For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he *liveth by the power of God*: for we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.”

—— 14.—“ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.”

The different texts from this Epistle are remarkably precise and perspicuous; and when they are all taken together, and when it is observed that several of them fell, as it were, indirectly from the Apostle's pen, under every variety of circumstances—sometimes in prayer to God, sometimes in explanation of the great scheme of redemption, sometimes by way of adding force to an exhortation, and sometimes in solemn asseveration of the sincerity with which the Apostles declared the will of God—they form a mass of evidence, in proof of Paul's opinion of our Lord's nature, that hardly any equivocal passages could shake. I confess, I am not aware of any texts so equivocal as to cause any man to waver that takes the *sense* of Scripture for his guide: but even granting that we had whole Epistles ambiguous in their expressions, there is enough in this to throw light upon them all. The term “God” is restricted to the Father of our Lord in chap. i. 3. and xi. 31. It is this God even the Father that stablisheth us in Christ—that causeth us to triumph in Christ. It is in HIS sight and before HIM that we speak in Christ: it is toward HIM we have trust through Christ: it is of HIM that all things are; and it is HE that hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ: it is HE that raised up the Lord Jesus, and will raise up us also by Jesus: it is by HIS POWER that Christ, who is HIS *Son* and HIS image, now liveth; and, what is very remarkable is, that his present life is said to depend upon the very same power of God on which our future lives depend. How strange is it that men will not attend to the abundant witness that God has given us of himself in his word!

GAL. i. 1.—“ Paul an Apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.”

—— 3, 4, 5.—“ Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God our Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

—— 15, 16.—“ But when it pleased God.....to reveal his Son in me.”

GAL. iii. 26.—“For ye are all the children of *God* by faith in Christ Jesus.”

— iv. 4.—But when the fulness of time was come, *God sent forth his Son*, &c.” See also verses 5, 6, 7.

— 14.—“Received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.”

How explicit is the testimony of this Epistle. In the first verse, the term God is appropriated to the Father—it is according to the will of this God that Jesus Christ gave himself for our sins: it he HE that was pleased to send forth his *Son* in the fulness of time, and to reveal his Son in Paul—and the opinion of Paul as to the nature of that Son who was revealed in him is most strongly marked in the 14th verse of the iv. chap. which harmonizes remarkably with those other passages that seem to assign to our Saviour a rank between the angels of God and the Almighty himself.

EPHES. i. 1. 2. 3.—“Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God. Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” See also the succeeding verses.

— 17.—“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.”

— 19, — 23.—“According to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,” &c. &c.

— ii. 4.—7.—“But God, who is rich in mercy, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

— 10.—“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.”

— 16.—“And that he might reconcile both unto God, in one body, by the cross.”

— 18.—“For through him we both have access, by one spirit, unto the Father.”

— 23.—“And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, *Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.*”

— iii. 9.—“In God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.”

— 11.—“According to the Eternal purpose which he (God) purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

— 14.—“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

— 21.—“Unto HIM be glory in the Church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end.—Amen.

— iv. 4. 5. 6.—“There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling:—one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, *One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*”

EPHES. v. 20.—“ Giving thanks always for all things unto *God and the Father*, in the name of our *Lord Jesus Christ*.”

—vi. 23.—“ Peace be to the brethren and love with Faith, from *God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*.”

Perhaps there is no other Epistle in which the Apostle has more clearly and copiously explained his view of the Person of Christ, than in this short, animated, interesting, and sublime Epistle to the Ephesians. The word “ God ” is expressly restricted to mean the Father in the 3d and 17th verses of chap. i.; in the 6th v. of chap. iv.; in 20th v. of chap. v.; and 23d v. of chap. vi. HE hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ, and hath quickened us together with Christ. HE is above all, through all and in all. His mighty power raised Christ from the dead and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places. It is unto HIM that the Apostle prays that HE may give unto the Ephesians the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ: it is to HIM (the FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ) that he bows his knees in prayer, that HE would grant them according to the riches of his grace to be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner-man: and it is unto HIM that glory is to be ascribed in the Church by Jesus Christ, throughout all ages, world without end. Is it not very remarkable that in this Epistle, after representing Jesus Christ, as being set at the right hand of God, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come; as having all things put under his feet, as being head over all things unto the church: after representing the unsearchable riches of Christ, and apparently exhausting the forms of speech to testify his sense of the blessings of the Gospel; that, after all this, in the 14th v. of chap. iii. he should, as it were, turn his thoughts out of the channel in which they were flowing, and, in the act of prayer, should bow his knees, not to that Jesus whose exaltation and glory had been for so long the theme of his sublime eloquence, but to a greater than he, even to the “ Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ! ”

EREUNETES.

N. B.—In page 181, the reference to the note should be remove from ACTS, xvii, 31. to ROM. i. 3. 4.—and in page 184, line 3, for concludes read precludes.

IRISH UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN SOCIETY.

To the Editors of the Bible Christian.

You reported in your First Number the formation of a Unitarian Society, in the vicinity of Killileagh and Saintfield. The central Society has just been established in Dublin, and copies of its prospectus have been pretty extensively circulated in the North of Ireland. The framers of it deem their views of the Gospel eminently adapted to attract rational and reflecting minds, to cool the prevailing fever of religious excitement, to substitute a fraternal charity for that bigotry with which the doctrine of exclusive salvation has infested the land, to raise the soul to a filial alliance with its infinite Father, and to bring its piety to bear on the great moralities of life.

The *principles* on which the Society is founded, are these—

1st. That subjects of doubtful disputation, in matters of religion, are wholly subservient in importance to the great principles which enter into the creed of every professing Christian ; and, that “charity is greater than faith.”

2d. That all human formularies of faith encroach on the right of private judgment, and virtually deny the sufficiency of the Scriptures.

3d. That the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is strictly and personally ONE.

The *objects* of the society are---

1st. To produce sympathy and co-operation among those who believe in the personal unity of God.

2d. To bring before the public mind, by publishing and circulating books and tracts, such reasonings and information, as may tend to establish and illustrate the doctrine of the strict Unity of God.

3d. To extend by the same means the influence of the devotional and practical parts of Revelation.

4th. If at some future time the funds should permit, to employ or aid Missionaries in recommending those views of Christianity in which all Unitarian Christians agree.

So far as this society embraces devotional and practical objects, it must be welcomed by all who have the interests of the Gospel at heart. And so long as its

controversial labours be confined to laying fairly before the public mind the *evidence* on which its doctrines rest, it ought to be regarded with no jealous eye by any sincere advocate of free enquiry. Every contribution to theological evidence is an approach to theological truth; and he who remembers that "opinion is but knowledge in the making," will rejoice at every honourable effort to publish the deliberate convictions of enquiring and conscientious minds. I cannot but approve the frankness and courage with which the society has assumed the name of Unitarian. Notwithstanding all that has been said against this much reviled appellation, the objections to it are, in my opinion, objections of feeling and taste, not of reason. It can scarcely be denied that Unitarian is the best opposite term to Trinitarian. They both draw our attention to a *doctrine*, not to a *theological leader*; and the doctrine implied in the one is a direct denial of that denoted by the other. Even if the name had been appropriated by the Humanitarians, I would put it to the Arians whether it be not too good a title to be relinquished to their monopolizing brethren; and whether it does not behove them, by boldly assuming it, to rescue it from the exclusive associations with which it has been connected. But nothing can be more untrue than that it has become the prescriptive property of the Humanitarian. The Unitarians of America are, for the most part, Arians; and in England there are many Arians undistinguished from the general body of the Unitarian Church. The reasons assigned in the prospectus for the adoption of the title are satisfactory; and I am convinced, that the safest, as well as the most honest way of meeting the obloquy of a name, is to take it up, and use it openly, and fearlessly, in the presence of God and man.

Apprehensions have been expressed, lest this society in Dublin should injure the cause of the Remonstrants in the eyes of the world. I do not admire the principle on which this objection to the society is made. I think that in religious matters there may be too close a calculation of consequences.

In every sect too much has been thought of *expediency*, too little of *duty*. And the clergy, in particular, in their writings, their preaching, and their conduct, have had their eye too much fixed on the sentiments and wishes of others, and too little on the real interest of

men and the honour of God. But after all, how a society, formed in Dublin for the maintenance of principles known to be at variance with the sentiments of some of the Remonstrants,---a society having no necessary connexion with the Presbyterian church, should have an injurious effect in the North of Ireland, can be discovered only by the quick eye and ready imagination of the over-cautious. So far as the society in question devotes its labours to the defence of the great principles of religious liberty, all the Remonstrants should hail it as a fellow-labourer. Those of them who are Unitarians may carry their sympathy with its exertions yet farther; while those who are not, are sufficiently numerous to evince that their cause is unconnected with the interests of the Unitarian society.

But I think that the Unitarians have shown a just understanding of the signs of the times in coming forward at the present crisis. There can be no doubt that the same convulsion which has broken the ecclesiastical chain of the Synod of Ulster will also disturb the doctrinal repose of the North of Ireland. Sensible minds will suspect that a creed so cautiously guarded with articles and overtures as that of the Synod, must be peculiarly liable to danger from attack. Such formidable outworks, it will naturally be thought, would not be thrown up, if the citadel within were impregnable.

This suspicion will stimulate to investigation; and wherever there is investigation, there is the most hopeful sphere for the activity of proselyting societies. It is moreover beyond a doubt that the union of all the Presbyterian body in the Synod of Ulster, the annual meeting of its members, and the intimacy of many of its ministers holding opposite sentiments, have long kept quiet a considerable amount of heterodoxy, really existing under the veil. But the spell of silence is now broken, and that which was "spoken in the ear in closets, is now ready to be proclaimed from the house tops." It is my earnest prayer that, amid the din of controversy, the "still small voice" with which Jesus would breathe into the heart of his followers his own heavenly spirit of piety and love, may not be overpowered and lost.

Who so shall reverently listen to the accents of that voice, his cause shall God upraise and bless.

M.

TO THE REV. HENRY COOKE, D.D.

SIR---Having arrived in this town, after an absence from it of several years, on Saturday, the 8th instant, I gladly availed myself of the opportunity that presented itself, of hearing your forenoon lecture on the ensuing Sabbath. As the weather was rather unfavourable, I found no difficulty in procuring the accommodation of a pew, very near the foot of the pulpit stairs; where I possessed the double advantage of both seeing and hearing you distinctly, so that I lost not a single word of your admirable discourse. And I assure you, it was with great pleasure, and I trust some profit also, that I listened to your excellent elucidation of the characteristic coincidence which the Scriptures mark out, as subsisting between *Melchisedech*, the illustrious archetype of the Son of God, and that glorious personage whose sacred offices he prefigured. Permit me to say, without any design to flatter you, that the specimen I then received of your talents, as a pulpit orator, fully justified the high expectations I had indulged, from listening to the trumpet of fame, relative to those talents.

Yet Sir, after this tribute, justly due to that portion of your lecture which immediately embraced the objects alluded to, will you bear with me, if I venture to express a feeling of diffidence respecting the perfect accuracy of a passage in your introductory observations, which had an immediate reference to what you termed, "*the supreme and sole DEITY of JESUS CHRIST.*"* Now, Sir, whatever I hear from the pulpit, I consider to be fair matter of candid investigation, and honest criticism. Whether I may be competent to that task, in the present case, is a question which I shall not attempt to decide; but I am able to ascertain what is, or what is not satisfactory to my own mind, and, in this point of view, I beg leave to state that I have a decided objection to the expression above quoted, as a definition of *your creed*, respecting the person of the Deity. I confess I can neither understand nor regard it in any other point of view than as being downright *Unitarianism*, with a limitation of the Godhead to the *second person* in the

* These were your precise words, which I instantly noted down.

Divine Trinity; and, consequently, involving the total exclusion of both the Father and the Holy Spirit from all participation in Deity.* I ask you, Sir, what other construction can any rational being put upon those words, flowing from the lips of so accomplished an orator as Dr. Cooke,---“The *supreme* and *sole* Deity of Jesus Christ?”

I believe, Sir, the vindication of that sentence, should you attempt it, will place you, according to logical phraseology, “between the horns of the following dilemma,” viz. Either, 1st, you are a SABELLIAN, denying the distinction of persons in the Divine essence; or, 2d, you must be an UNITARIAN, but limiting the supreme Godhead to the *Son of God*! Which of these characters you will assume, I, of course, do not pretend to know; but one of them, I believe, is inseparable from the principle contained in the quoted passage. That neither Sabellianism, nor *that species of Unitarianism*, is the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, is, however, a fact, which I need not spend much time in proving:—for I presume that, upon cool reflection, you will not yourself be inclined to advocate either of those doctrines. The first you know involves the incarnation, sufferings, and death of “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;” and the second evicts HIM from all share in the Godhead. You must therefore either retract that expression, as an unguarded and indefensible effusion of *superabundant* “orthodoxy:” or qualify it by an amendment of some kind or other.

And, if I may be permitted to anticipate what that amendment might be, I should conjecture that you would fly for refuge to the doctrine of “the Trinity in Unity,”

* The word *sole*, in this connexion, necessarily excludes both the Father and Holy Spirit from *all* share in the Godhead; but the word *supreme* appears to admit those divine Beings to an *inferior degree* of Deity! “Supreme” is an expression of comparison and degree, but with a decision of *superiority* in favour of its object: now there are no beings in the universe who could be supposed to contest the point of *supremacy* in the Godhead with the Lord Jesus Christ, but the Father and the Holy Spirit; the admission of this term, therefore, into the controversy, is itself a confession of comparative degrees in the possession of Deity, between the three divine Hypostases, and while it fixes the supremacy upon the second person, necessarily degrades both the first and third persons. Is not this a *new species* of “orthodoxy?”

as the constitution of the Deity; in which case the terms "supreme and sole Deity of Jesus Christ," must be exchanged for "the supreme and sole Deity of the Trinity;---of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." Should this be your mode of defence, or rather of *escape*, I would beg leave to ask you, First,—Is not each person in the Divine Trinity possessed of those peculiar attributes of identity which both constitute and demonstrate him to be a distinct, self-determining, and self-conscious, intellectual being? * Secondly, Are you prepared to prove that God, the Supreme, Eternal, self-existent Creator of all things, is a *compound being*, consisting of an hypostatical union of three such beings as are described in the first question? And allow me to apprise you, that if you can and do prove this proposition, you will thereby *undeify* the whole Trinity, *seriatim*; for it is certain, that if it requires the hypostatical continuation of these three beings to constitute the one, true and only God, then neither any one, nor any two of them can be that God. Nay, what is far worse than even this, the composition itself cannot be a God of infinite perfection; for as, according to this hypothesis, neither of the divine persons can be the only true God, so they must all be, individually, *imperfect beings*; and it is certain that no combination of imperfection can ever constitute absolute and infinite perfection. Thus you see, Sir, that the Doctrine of a Trinity in Unity ends in direct Atheism.

* See the indubitable evidences of this important fact displayed respecting the Father and Son, including the essential inferiority as well as the official subordination of the latter, in John vi. 38 and xiv. 28, where he expressly says, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him (viz. the Father,) that sent me:" "for my Father is greater than I." Both these passages refer to the *divine nature* of their author, because it alone "came down from heaven," and it was that nature only of which God was the Father: for, *kata sarka*, i.e. according to the flesh, David was his Father.—(Acts ii. 30. Rom. i. 3.) And the distinction, as well as the inferiority of the Holy Spirit, in reference to both the Father and the Son, is clearly revealed in John xvi. 13, 14, 15. "Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.—He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shew it unto you.—All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore, said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you."

That doctrine is, therefore, incapable of proof, or even of support, from rational principles: and it is not only equally unsupported by the Scriptures, but directly contradictory to their express testimony, bearing immediately on the point at issue. I grant, indeed, that the Scriptures, particularly in the Old Testament, speak of God under a plural denomination, and you well know that the plural Hebrew terms, Elohim, or Alehim, thus used, often include both angels and men: and even in the New Testament, the Greek word Theos, though a singular noun, is variously applied, and by no means does it always indicate supreme, sole, and independent Deity. In one instance it is even applied to Satan, in reference to his dominion over this world; (See 2 Cor. iv. 4.) and it is therein officially, and repeatedly applied to the Son of God; but in all these instances it must be understood in a sense which corresponds with that subordination and inferiority which are *unequivocally* ascribed to that Son, even in some of those very passages in which his essential divinity is asserted; and where he is saluted by that very title, the import of which is the question now at issue.*

* I believe it will be found to be both a legitimate and a necessary rule of interpretation, in our efforts to understand the *letter* of Scripture, to adopt such a meaning of equivocal expressions, whether they consist of single words or whole sentences, as shall not involve a contradiction to any plain and unequivocal expression of Scripture bearing upon the same point; or to human reason and common sense. Thus, when Christ said to Martha, "Whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die,"—(John, xi. 26.)—although both the occasion, and the whole drift of his discourse, justified the presumption that this expression related to the death of the body, yet our enlightened reason assures us that it must be understood of the death of the soul alone; and even in that sense it must be received as a figurative expression, for the human spirit is an imperishable essence, naturally incapable of dissolution in any form. The *death of the soul*, therefore, can only mean its separation from God, as the fountain of divine life, and eternal felicity. So, when we read—(John, xvii. 3.)—that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is "the only true God;" and again,—(Rom. ix. 5.) that Jesus Christ is "over all, God blessed for ever," our reason assures us that the term God must be applied to him in an accommodating sense; indicative, not of his identity with, or equality to "the only true God," but of the dominion which that God had given him over the whole universe. This interpretation is confirmed by 1 Cor. xv. 28;—"And when all things shall be subdued

These important, and, to me, decisive facts, are, I believe, contained, *inter, alia*, in the following passages of Scripture, which, in my estimation, fix the supreme, sole, and self-existent Deity in the person of "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." "God is a spirit," *Pneuma ho Theos*, i. e. *one* spirit, consequently HE is not a composition of three spirits. JOHN, iv. 24. "And this is life eternal," (therefore, it is not a matter of mere speculation, but *essential to salvation*;) "that they might know" (not the Son of God, not the Holy Spirit, not the Divine Trinity, but) THEE, (as) the only true God; and Jesus Christ—whom thou "hast sent" as thy missionary and agent, to be the Redeemer of the world. (See Jesus Christ's last solemn act of worship and adoration, addressed to his "God and Father," prior to his passion, recorded in JOHN, xvii. 3. &c.)

1 COR. viii. 5.—"For though there be that are called Gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there be Gods many, and Lords many,)"

—— 6.—"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

These passages contain express testimonies of the sole and supreme Godhead of the Father, considered in his personal distinction from both the Son and the Holy Spirit; what follows contains partly direct and partly inferential evidences of the superiority of the Father to the Son; but they are decisive of that point, and unanswerable.

1 COR. xv. 24.—"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power."

HEB. i. 8. 9.—"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." Whereas, were we to contend that the term God, in Rom. ix. 5, proves "the supreme and sole deity of Jesus Christ," we must thereby contradict John xvii. 3, and destroy the personal distinction of two divine Beings, or establish a plurality of co-equal and co-eternal supreme Gods. Thus would impiety and absurdity become the basis of our creed.

In the last mentioned passage, the Son of God is saluted by his superior title of God ; but mark, even under that title, it is evident, 1st. that he had been previously placed in a state of probation: 2d. that he was found faithful therein; and by virtue of that fidelity, he was entitled to, and actually received an adequate reward from HIS GOD, who was the judge of his conduct, and the arbiter of his recompence. And mark it well, the Holy Ghost testifieth, that, "without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the better." (HEB. vii. 7.) *Ergo*, the Son of God, *as God*, is still *less* than *his* "God and Father," who is consequently *greater* than he.

That both the Son and Spirit of God, are essentially divine beings, as personal emanations from the Deity, is, to my mind, an unquestionable fact, and fully proved, in my estimation, in reference to the Son, by JOHN, viii. 42. "For *I proceeded forth, and came from God*;" and in reference to the Holy Spirit, by JOHN, xv. 26. "But when the Comforter is come, even the Spirit of Truth, *which proceedeth from the Father*, he shall testify of me." But, Sir, their thus partaking, *by derivation*, in any supposable, or possible degree, (and who shall define or *measure* that degree?) of the divine nature, no more constitutes them portions of the Deity, than the possession of human nature derived from you, constitutes your offspring portions of yourself, after their personal procession from you. You would be as perfect a man as you now are, if they were annihilated: and although I will not say that God *could* annihilate both his Son and Spirit, yet I challenge you to prove that he *could not* do so; and if he could, you must confess that he would still be as much and as essentially the infinitely perfect God without them, as he now is in operative conjunction with them.

That operative, yea *co-operative* conjunction, I fully admit in the works of creation, redemption and preservation; and I also admit that the personal association and ineffable union of the three divine beings in the accomplishment of those works are of so close and intimate a character, that they approximate even to *essential* unity,* and actually involve *official* unity. One charac-

* I probably you may be inclined to suppose that JOHN, x. 30—"I and my Father are one," implies an hypostatical union in the constitution of the Godhead: if so, a reference to JOHN, xvii. 11.

teristic of this union is, that as the Father dwells and works in, by, and through the Son, so he has implanted his name as well as his nature in that Son. This important fact, which furnishes the true key to innumerable passages of Scripture, which would be otherwise incomprehensible, is revealed in reference to the three states in which the Son of God has been manifested to mankind. The first state is that which preceded his incarnation; in reference to that, we find the Father establishing the authority of the Son, by saying, respecting him, to the children of Israel,

EXODUS, xxiii. 20. 21.—“Behold, I send an angel before thee to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions; for my name is in him.”

This accounts for his frequent speaking *in the name* of the supreme God, the Jehovah of Israel, in all his appearances to and communications with the Patriarchs and Prophets of that dispensation: but his own proper denomination was then “THE LOGOS OF JEHOVAH,” under which title he is often spoken of in the prophetic writings.*

The second state was that of his incarnation; respecting which it is said, that “God *was in Christ*, reconciling the world unto himself;” (2 COR. v. 19.) and Jesus himself testified to his disciples that “the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but of the Father, who dwelleth in me; and *he doeth the work*.”—(JOHN, xiv. 10.) And in reference to the third state, which was that of his glorification, after his resurrection, the Holy Ghost witnesseth, that, “In him *dwelleth* all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” (COLOSS. ii. 9.) And that this indwelling is not inherent, but communicated, is clear from the testimony of Christ himself—“All power is *given unto me* in heaven and in earth.” (MATT. xxviii. 18.)

20. 21. 22. 32. will correct that erroneous conception; because those passages state a *similar union* to be the common privilege of every believer in Christ.

* That the Logos is not the supreme, self-existent and eternal God, is proved by the express testimony of the Holy Ghost, (COLOSS. i. 15) who saith that he is “the image of the invisible God, and the first born, (*prototokos*) of every creature:” and by that of Christ himself, (EVE. iii. 14.) who saith he is the beginning of the creation of God.

Hence it is clear to every unprejudiced mind, that the ascription of the incommunicable divine attributes, and the works of omnipotence, to the Son of God, is no proof of *his* "supreme, sole Deity;" but only of the supreme and sole Deity of his God and Father, who dwells and works in the Son of his love; who is the bright effulgence of his glory, and the counterpart of his hypostasis; but still that Son is the offspring of his Father, whom he ever worshipped as his God; and as an offspring, it is certain he cannot be either self-existent or existing from eternity. But his God and Father is also equally our God and Father; for thus ran his kind message to his disciples, after his resurrection from the dead: "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." (JOHN xx. 17.) "For as both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one;" (*i. e.* of one family, and one originally common essence, as all springing from one common Father,) so "for that cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." (HEB. ii. 11.) This fraternal connexion is generical, spiritual, and divine; witness ACTS xvii. 28. "For we also are his (*viz.* God's) offspring;" and Jesus is "the *first-born* among many brethren," ROM. viii. 29,—which is not true of his fleshly nature; for all his ancestors, according to the flesh, were necessarily born before him. Moreover, it was this spiritual fraternity, which alone could give to the Son of God the right, as our *God*, or near kinsman, to redeem the human race; and St. Paul traces the incarnation of the Son of God to that very source, when he says—"Forasmuch then as the children" (of God, by natural procreation) "are partakers of flesh and blood," (*viz.* are incarnated spirits,) "he also himself likewise took part of the same," because "it behoved him, in all things to be made like unto his brethren;" that by his incarnation he might be able "through death to destroy him that had the power of death, that is the Devil." Here you will observe, that it was his previous fraternal connexion, by divine generation, with the race of Adam, which induced his submission to incarnation, that "being made perfect through sufferings," he might become "the author of eternal salvation to all who obey him." (HEB. v. 7. 8. 9.)

In all these transactions we recognise only the incarnated Logos, as "the man Christ Jesus," for "the se-

cond man is the Lord from Heaven ;" (1 COR. xv. 47.) and he it was who was "*found in fashion as a man ;*" (PHILIP. ii. 8.) and being such he required not any created spirit, or *human soul*, as it is usually called, to be attached to him in an hypostatical union, or associated with him as a coadjutor in effecting human redemption, which is a contemptible fabrication of the dark ages of popish delusion, equally revolting to reason and true philosophy, and opposed to divine revelation, which countenances no such ridiculous fable.

It was Sir, as I apprehended, an inattention on your part to the circumstances of the *ineffable*, but certainly not *hypostatical* union which subsists between the Father and the Son, as glanced at in a preceding part of this letter, which misled you into the erroneous statement you made in the introduction to your lecture, viz. that the angel of the covenant, the divine Logos or Word, in, by, and through whom God spake to the children of Israel, as well as to their Fathers, was himself *alone* "the only true God ;" whereas had you only turned to ACTS, iii. 13. the Holy Ghost would have there set you right on the point at issue, in those remarkable and decisive words ; "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our Fathers hath glorified *his Son*, Jesus : " &c. Here you must plainly perceive that it is *the Father* and *not the Son*, who is the true God of Israel ; and I suspect you will not readily assert that Jesus Christ is either his own Son or his own Father. But by no other means can he be "the only true God." One word more, and I have done. I observed that the phrase "eternal son," escaped you in the course of your lecture. Are you then an advocate for the doctrine of "the eternal sonship ?" Know you not, Sir, that filiation implies generation ; and that generation is the process by which a being is brought into existence ? Yes, your philosophy teaches you this. And does it not also teach you that the moment a being is brought into actual existence, the process of his generation must necessarily cease ? Most certainly ! Then, as long as that process continues in operation, its subject is only in the embryo of existence. Now, extend that process to eternity, and you have,—what ? An eternally abortive effort to produce a being who never did, never will, and never can exist ! And give me leave to ask, Sir, is this the mode of generation

which you ascribe to the Son of God? An eternal abortion! Nay—awful to relate, you assert that this very being, embryo subject of this abortive effort at generation, is himself the “supreme and sole Deity!”—Thus, Sir, you have once more arrived by a different route at the point of Atheism; and shown that God never did and never can exist! I am, Rev. Sir, &c.

PHILALETHES.

Belfast, 10th May, 1830.

P.S.—Upon the presumption, for argument sake, that your hypothesis, which asserts “the supreme and sole Deity of Jesus Christ,”—is true, I beg leave to ask you—1st, Is there any Mediator between *this* God and Men? If you say there is, I ask, 2dly, Who is that Mediator? If you say it is “the man, Christ Jesus,” I ask, 3dly. How differs *he* from the being of whom you assert, under the very same designation, that he is the supreme God of the Universe? Surely you will not maintain that the same identical, individual being, is at once the supreme God and a created man: that God is a man, and a man is God! If you do, you will successfully rival all the *sacred mysteries* of the heathen Mythology! But if your common sense tells you that this is impossible, I have a right to demand from you, both a definition of the distinction between the “God Jesus Christ,” and “the man Christ Jesus,” and also a description of the origin of the latter, and the mode of his spiritually general, as well as his corporeal identity with the race of Adam, which he undertook to redeem. For Sir, you well know, that it was in human nature alone, that God, in the exercise of his divine justice, could legitimately seek for an eligible, sacrificial victim, as the medium of the reconciliation of that race to himself.

P.

WE publish the foregoing letter with much pleasure, (notwithstanding the somewhat ironical eulogy in the introduction,) for we consider that it contains a forcible argument, very powerfully stated. In some few criticisms of minor importance, we should, perhaps, differ from the author: nor do we, in any case, pledge ourselves to exact agreement with our correspondents, in all their sentiments. We hope to hear further from Philalethes; and have only to request that he will quote the passages of Scripture at length, as it greatly retards the progress of the printer to have to refer to the Bible, and the Editors have so much to occupy them, on the approach of the day of publication, that they cannot undertake the office of transcribing.

EDITORS.

THE following Letter was forwarded to "The Orthodox Presbyterian," in refutation of a calumny contained in its pages, but was refused insertion, for alleged reasons with which we have no concern. We deem it an act of justice to Mr. GLENDY to give it a place in our publication.—EDITORS.

To the Editors of "The Orthodox Presbyterian."

GENTLEMEN—I could scarcely have supposed, that, under any circumstances, I should ever be induced to become a contributor to the pages of "The Orthodox Presbyterian." You must, however, admit, that, had I been easily provoked, the notice with which you have so repeatedly honoured me and the Congregation with which I am connected, would have formed a sufficient apology for my doing so; but believing, as I do, that one part of the Christian character consists in "bearing long," I hoped by silent endurance to afford the reputed conductors of that work an opportunity to recall *some of the kindlier feelings of former days*; and if this could not effect a change, that I might by patience wear out that enmity which, though deeply rooted, is not, I trust, either eternal or inexhaustible. A letter, however, published in your last number, signed JOHN ORR, and reflecting upon my character, for veracity, demands from me some notice. The person whose name is affixed to that communication, never wrote it; and every one who knows him, knows that he is *utterly incapable of writing it*. I should have passed it by, as I have done many other calumnies from the same quarter, as every way too contemptible to be noticed, were it not, that an opportunity is thereby sought to injure a good, but much calumniated and misrepresented cause. This communication you have entitled "A Calumny Refuted;" and as you have thereby attempted to affix on me the character of calumniator, you cannot be guilty of the injustice of refusing me, through the same medium by which you published the charge, an opportunity of showing how unfounded it is, and *how rash and uncharitable* has been your sentence. This opprobrious charge is one which should not, on any occasion, be hastily taken up against any individual, much less against a Minister, by Ministers of the Gospel. A better evidence, than the *uncor-*

roborated testimony of the individual accused of that, which, if committed, he admits would stamp him "an inhuman monster," is required to establish his innocence, and prove the charge of calumny. For, if the evidence of the accused can procure an acquittal, we shall have few convictions; and the laws of our country, which exclude such testimony, must be most tyrannical and unjust. Yet, on *this authority alone*, the conductors of "The Orthodox Presbyterian" have founded their sentence, and stamped *calumniator* upon a man whose veracity they have long known; and which they have often pronounced to be unimpeachable.

The facts relating to the man and horse, alluded to in Orr's letter, are simply these: In going down one of the steepest hills in this neighbourhood, with a loaded cart of grain, the breeching of the horse gave way. In endeavouring to prevent the beast from being run off his feet, by the weight of the loaded cart, the man and horse, in attempting to cross the road, were run against a hedge. At that time, *on the steepest part of the hill*, and not on "the level," nor opposite the "spring well when there was safety," *but in the moment of danger*, John Orr, with the humanity of the Priest and Levite, of old, "passed by on the other side." This is the statement of Isaac Culbert, who drove the horse, and between John Orr and him let the matter rest. It is but right, however, to add, that when he was told that Orr had denied what passed, he characterized his conduct in a way which I shall not detail; offered to go before a Magistrate and make oath to the *falsehood* of Orr's statement, and the truth of his own; and it is *perfectly well known in the neighbourhood*, that he is willing, at any time, to make oath to the truth of what he related. An oath, however, has always appeared to me too solemn an act to be used on such trivial occasions, and I did exert all my influence to prevent it.

It is but right, farther to add, that John Orr has told a variety of stories about this affair, *some of which must be gross contradictions*.

At first he denied, most solemnly, *having seen the man or horse, that day*. This he did in the presence both of the respected "Vicar of the parish," and before Messrs. William M'Bride and John Horsborough. The same he did to James M'Causland, of Ballycarry, who is mar-

ried to a sister of Orr's mother ; and M'Causland will name to him several others who were then present, and who heard him make the declaration. Now, when does John Orr tell the truth ? Is it when he writes to you, that "*he did not see the man and horse,*" and details, most minutely, every circumstance connected with passing them in a "place of safety ;" or when he declares, *most solemnly, to God*, he did not see them—as will be testified by two of the gentlemen named above ?

It is but right, also, to add, that Isaac Culbert, whom John Orr twice calls "a boy," was seventeen years ago a *man*, in my service ; that he is now my servant again—no bad proof of the opinion I entertained of his character ; and that he has served with several of the most respectable individuals in this neighbourhood, from all of whom he can obtain most excellent certificates. But the fact is, even John Orr will not have the *hardihood* to say, that he has not, from his infancy, maintained the most exemplary character for honesty and truth ; and were he *unprincipled enough* to do otherwise, there is not a man of respectability in the place who would not contradict him.

Now, Gentlemen, on the authority of this man, whom I have known for nearly twenty years, as a person of truth and character, I did, at a meeting of Presbytery in Ballycarry, make the statement which he related to me ; and I did it for the purpose of showing the effects produced, in the neighbourhood, by the line of conduct pursued, of late, by some Ministers of the Synod, and for the purpose of illustrating the declaration of our Saviour, "by their fruits ye shall know them." But it seems, upon the authority of "The Orthodox Presbyterian," that the man who relates what is told him by a person whom he has known so long, whose veracity he has never doubted, and who offers the sanction of his oath, in confirmation of what he states, is a calumniator!! Pray, Gentlemen, and what are you who make this charge? *Grosser calumniators* ; for, you have *circulated a falsehood* upon the authority of a person whom you have *never known intimately*, whom you have not known for the one-fourth of the time, and who has procured some person to write a letter in his name, to clear himself from a charge established against him by such evidence, that were the crime cognizable by law, there is *not a jury in the kingdom but would convict him*.

But really, Gentlemen, neither the *person* nor the circumstance deserves this notice. If it be your intention to convey to the public, that there is none of that bickering, and strife, and evil-speaking, in a once peaceful neighbourhood, of which these stories are only a specimen, nothing can be more unfounded. I refer you to John Orr, himself, for the manner in which he lately characterized me and my friends, when returning out of Larne market, of which I will afford him such evidence as he will not dare to contradict. Indeed, there is not a fair or market, in the neighbourhood, which does not afford abundant but melancholy proofs of the unhappy contentions which prevail. Once, we were united and peaceful; now, the mournful prediction of our blessed Saviour, that the father shall be opposed to the son, and the mother against her daughter, is literally fulfilled. Neighbours, who once lived together on the most friendly terms, do not enter each others' houses, scarcely exchange a common salutation, and even the nearest ties of nature are broken asunder; and yet, these were the feelings with which men within the bounds of this Congregation were, on a late occasion, not only invited, but encouraged by Ministers of the Synod of Ulster, to *sit down at the Lord's table*. Thus, has that ordinance, which is eminently characterized as *a feast of love*, and which should lead to mutual peace and forgiveness, been awfully prostituted to the purpose of keeping alive party strife and unchristian contention. These facts are too notorious to be denied, even by "*The Orthodox Presbyterian*," unless it wish to establish more widely its own infamy.

But, Gentlemen, why should you be surprised at these things, when I have been informed, upon most respectable authority, that one of your Ministers, preaching lately within the bounds of my congregation, *pronounced us all to be idolaters*; and that another, in a public baptism, railing against me and my remonstrant brethren, wondered we could baptize into the name of the Holy Ghost, when we did *not believe there was a Holy Ghost!* Can you be surprised, that an ignorant, ill-educated countryman, under the influence of such infuriated addresses, should say, "*Hell will never be full till Glendy is there.*"

Look back also to some of your own publications, and

see, whether you have not with, perhaps, more of the polish of the world, but with less of plainness and sincerity, said substantially the same thing. Whether justly or not, you affix on us certain names, you then pronounce these to indicate "the absence of all religion;" and you applaud this as a very excellent and accurate definition. Now, Gentlemen, can you tell me how there can be salvation when there is the absence of all religion? And what is this but the declaration of the plain uneducated countryman, "*Hell will never be full till I am there?*" Again, in a tract lately published by the conductors of "The Orthodox Presbyterian," entitled "Advice to Congregations," we find the following statement: In condemning a practice which, in several Congregations, had been adopted by both parties as a peaceable way of ascertaining the opinions of the people respecting their adherence to their Minister or to the Synod, you declare, that, "the person who signs for the Minister who may have baptized him, and may have been his instructor, for nearly forty years, without *one single change of sentiment*,* is, as far as he can, signing away the dignity and glory of the Lord Jesus." Now, in my Bible I read, "he that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Can you tell me, then, how the professing Christian, who "signs away, as far as he can, the dignity and glory of the Lord Jesus," can be said to believe on him? And is not this consigning all who support us to utter condemnation! Who are they who pronounce this sentence upon me and my Remonstrant brethren? They are the men with whom *I have again and again sat down at the Lord's table*; to whom I have often distributed the bread and the wine, commemorative of the dying love of Christ; and from whose hands I have often received them; the men with whom I have often knelt in prayer, and for whom and their families, at their own request, I have prayed: the Ministers whose children I have baptized, with whom I long maintained the most unreserved confidence and intercourse, and who knew *intimately every opinion* I entertained;

* In this and the former case I am obliged to quote from memory, as I cannot at present find the Tract alluded to. W. G.

and yet, without *one single change of opinion* on my part, or the slightest immorality of conduct charged against me, they now, in a spirit which I shall not attempt to characterize, assume the prerogative of God, and pronounce against me the horrible sentence of eternal perdition. I pray God to forgive them this iniquity; and may he in whose hands are the hearts of all men, change their hearts, and bring them to see the evil of their thoughts.

WILLIAM GLENDY.

April 5, 1830.

P.S.—I should have noticed this communication sooner, but your fifth number did not fall into my hands until the month was too far advanced to expect you would afford this letter a place in your last. I send it for insertion in your next; and common justice demands that you should give it a place. I may also add, with regard to the parcel alluded to by John Orr, that he knows perfectly well the authority on which I made the statement, and that it rests upon the testimony of two individuals whose veracity he will not dare to impeach.

W. G.

ON THE WORSHIP AND UBIQUITY OF CHRIST.

THOSE who maintain the true Orthodox faith, as it is called, that Christ is perfect God and perfect man, and must so continue for evermore, are thrown into great perplexity about the worship of Christ. He is Lord God Almighty, and therefore must be worshipped with all their heart, and soul, and mind: he is perfect man, and therefore to worship him is idolatry. They must then worship his divine nature and not his human; but these are inseparable—what then are they to do?

To show that this is not an imaginary difficulty, I will give Bishop Bull's way of explaining it: and those who are at all acquainted with writers on Controversial Theology, must be aware that he is the grand pillar of Orthodoxy. He says that* “when the humanity of Christ

* See Ben Mordecai's Apology, page 92.

is adored, the creature is not so adored, but that the act reaches to the Creator who joined the created nature to himself in the unity of Person." He admits, then, that the creature is adored, or that the man Christ is adored, but only in such a manner that, while adoring Christ, the act of adoration extends still—to God. Now is not this precisely the defence of the Catholics for their beads, crucifixes, saints' worship, and what we look upon as acts of idolatry—that these are worshipped, indeed, but that the act of worship extends beyond them to the God of all? Is it not precisely the same defence that might be set up for Heathenism—that it was not idolatry, because the thoughts were extended beyond the mere block of wood or stone to a Spiritual Being?

Athanasius too, the great champion of Orthodoxy, in explaining the words in Psal. 99. 5. "worship ye his footstool," represents them as signifying that you are to worship the *human* nature of Christ.

Another question that has produced no small degree of perplexity, is the omnipresence of the man Christ. The God Christ, or the divine nature of Christ, is every where present: for if it be otherwise, then there must be part of Christ possessed of the divine and not of the human nature. Now how is this explained? The only explanation that I have ever seen is, that the human nature of Christ and the man Christ do not mean the same thing; and that Christ, at his ascension, took with him the human nature, but was no longer man; and that it is only this human nature that is omnipresent. But where the difference lies between *a man* and one possessed of human nature, has yet to be explained. I should think that if our human nature were taken away from us, we should be no longer men, and that this is the only thing that makes us be what we are.

Think not that what I am now stating is brought forward from a spirit of levity, or from a desire of throwing ridicule upon our orthodox brethren or their opinions. It is with some reluctance that I give even this slight notice of such questions, that form the subject of entire and most grave treatises by the most profound divines that ever wrote; and I dare not give the whole of what they say on such subjects, through fear of doing an irreparable injury to the general strain of thinking upon religious subjects. On our side of these questions, we

are very much hampered by this difficulty. We cannot do full justice to our views, because we cannot let others into all the consequences that by their own most sage divines have been admitted to follow from their opinions.

Were I to bring forward all the indecency that is to be found in writers who are appealed to as the very standards of Orthodoxy, when they are explaining these mysterious points, I know that I should furnish your readers with an all-powerful antidote against ever being seduced by plausible arguments to maintain such sentiments; but I dread much, that the associations that would be thereby excited in their minds, would give such a wound to religious feeling altogether, that they would lose all relish for holy things; and that the truth as it is in Christ Jesus would be unacceptable to their ears, as well as the errors of man's devising. I therefore forego the advantage of using this most powerful weapon; and indeed even with respect to those who are called upon, by the office they have undertaken of explaining the counsel of God in the salvation of the world, to examine more fully all the views that can be taken of these subjects: even with respect to them, it is most desirable that such questions should fleet as swiftly by them as possible and take no permanent hold of their minds. For the Ministers of Religion are also liable to have their sensibility to pious feelings blunted by this warfare about doctrines: Associations are established in their minds from which it is very difficult to release them afterwards: their thoughts become so habituated to flow in a certain channel, that even, when most required, they cannot divert them from it; and it may thus frequently happen, that opportunities will be for ever lost of exciting those emotions of piety, and impressing those principles of religious conduct in life, that are of more value than all doctrine, as charity excels that faith which could remove mountains, and that knowledge which could explain all mysteries.

V. D. M.

TO THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

1 Cor. xv. 24.—“Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.”

— 28.—“And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”

“Then shall the end of the *world* be—when he shall publicly and solemnly *deliver* up the *mediatorial kingdom* to God, even the Father, by whose *commission* he has held it, and to *whose glory* he has always administered it.”—DODDRIDGE’S EXPOSITOR.

SIR,—If your correspondent, Ereunetes, be right in his conjecture, that the exposition of this Text, in “The Orthodox Presbyterian,” for March, is an abstract of a popular sermon, I can only say, that the Preacher is little indebted to his anonymous reporter. His officious friend ought to have considered, that though a splendid declamation may excite the admiration of an audience more remarkable for zeal than knowledge, and credulity than logic, it is neither fair nor friendly to strip it of its gorgeous clothing, and expose it naked to the public eye. Such assemblies often think, they understand what is unintelligible; and not being allowed the use of reason, they are convinced without argument; and often moved by mere sound.

In the present case, the abridger of this sermon must surely have done great injustice to his author, for it is not credible, that a preacher of any character should so darken his subject by words without meaning. Thus, he confounds the end with the beginning, the future with the present and past, and subjection with independence, in the following sentence—

“The word *end*, though it *apparently*,” [in my mind, most manifestly,] “refers only to the concluding act of a series of times and events, yet evidently and necessarily, [for the purpose of the writer,] implies the beginning and the progress of times and events preceding the end.”

I am the more surprised at this, when, after groping in the dark, I turn my eyes to the text; for to me it appears as clear and bright as day—as far as the Arian hypothesis is concerned: for thus I reason:

The Father bestowed a kingdom on the Son. The giver and receiver must be two. Therefore, the Father and the Son cannot be *one*. The Father could not give it to himself. The giver is, so far (*quoad hoc*) superior to the receiver. Therefore they are not equal. If equal, they must be two; for one cannot be equal to himself.

The receiver is indebted to the giver. Therefore, the Son is neither independent nor all-sufficient.

The kingdom was bestowed at some period, either in time or eternity. Before that time the Son had it not. Therefore he was not then Almighty.

A time is fixed for delivering up the kingdom to the Father. The power of the Son will then be diminished. Therefore, he is not unchangeable.

The kingdom had a beginning and will come to an end. Therefore, the power of the Son is neither eternal nor everlasting.

After this period the Son will be subject to the Father. Therefore, he is not of like power or glory. Then will God *be all in all*. The mediatorial kingdom will be at an end; and there will be immediate access to the Father.

According to this text, then, there is between the Father and the Son neither identity nor equality; and on the part of the Son, neither eternity nor self-existence: neither independence nor immutability.

Were we to embrace other texts, we might go much further. We might say—

The Father gave to the Son, “to have life in himself.” He must have had it himself before he gave it. Therefore, they are not co-eternal. The Son received life from the Father: therefore, they are not co-equal.

The Son can do nothing of himself; therefore, not omnipotent. He knew not of the day of judgment; therefore not omniscient. He himself disclaimed the attribute of supreme goodness. He was to go away and come again; therefore not omnipresent. He prayed to his Father; therefore was dependant on him.—See this stated, Heb. v. 7. 8. 9. in words that I should not venture to use, without the authority of Paul.

He could not appoint James and John to sit on his right hand and on his left, even in his own kingdom; therefore his power was only a delegated authority.

In nothing was the piety of the Son more signally displayed than the frequency and earnestness with which he asserted the Unity and Individuality, and vindicated the Supremacy of the Father.

We willingly ascribe to the Son every degree of glory, power, wisdom, and grace assigned by the ardent genius, and energetic language of Paul, or the seraphic strains of John. We extol him in our prayers, which we offer in his name, through his mediation and intercession: we glorify him in our hymns. We conclude our services with scriptural doxologies. With these we are content. We have not the presumption to add to them, nor to pry into hidden mysteries, which even the angels desire in vain to look into; or to mix our profane speculations with the sacred oracles; to dissect and divide the ineffable Spirit into persons, essences, and substances; natures and wills: to substitute for the simple language of scripture, triple unities and hypostatic unions; and to frame eternal decrees dishonourable to the Father of all.—We dare not do so.

ERASMUS.

May, 27, 1830.

P. S.—I have withheld this Paper till now, expecting a continuation of the subject, in “The Orthodox Presbyterian,” for this month; but the argument seems to have been sufficiently answered by Ereunetes, and to be abandoned; and the notice withdrawn.

Intelligence.

MEETING OF THE REMONSTRANT SYNOD OF ULSTER.

The following is an abridged report of the proceedings of this Reverend Body. We regret that our limits do not permit us to insert the whole. The resolutions were introduced and supported by speeches, replete with eloquence, taste, and good feeling. The business of the meeting was conducted in the most dignified manner, and with a christian temper and decorum which Synods do not always manifest. The House was filled with a highly respectable, and attentive audience, and the interest excited was intense. The evenings were spent in the "feast of reason, and the flow of soul," the company numerous, liberal, and enlightened, and apparently animated by the worthiest affections of human nature.—The scene was every way refreshing and delightful, and we are convinced that almost every individual present on the occasion, felt his heart more expanded with gratitude to God, and benevolence to man.

On Tuesday, the 25th instant, the First Annual Meeting of those Ministers who separated from the General Synod of Ulster, in consequence of certain late measures adopted by that Body, took place in this town.

The Reverend HENRY MONTGOMERY commenced the business of the meeting by preaching from Psalms li. 6. "Behold thou desirest truth in the inward parts." After some introductory observations, on the nature of their present meeting, and dwelling on the necessity of sincerity in matters of religion, he reviewed, at great length, the grounds of their separation from the Synod of Ulster, and commented very powerfully on the late Overtures of that Body. He then proposed, that a Moderator for the year should be chosen; when the Rev. WILLIAM PORTER was unanimously appointed to that office.

The Rev. WILLIAM PORTER, on taking the Chair, said—Most of us, my christian brethren and friends, have long been in the habit of witnessing the convention of Synods and Presbyteries. Such assemblies are things

of frequent occurrence, and are seldom calculated to excite great intenseness of interest. The present meeting, however, is one of no ordinary character. It is marked by circumstances of a peculiar nature, and which can hardly fail to make the breast heave with emotions not easily suppressed. Cold must be the blood, that is not warmed—dull and phlegmatic must be the spirit, which is not animated, by contemplating the situation in which we stand, and the object which we have in view. We have come together on a most interesting occasion. We have come together to lay the foundation stone of a temple dedicated to RELIGIOUS LIBERTY—a temple, under whose ample dome, every individual who chooses to enter, will be allowed to worship, in his own way, the one God and Father of all. We have come together, not merely to profess, but to prove, that we are genuine Presbyterians—assertors of the right of private judgment—and advocates, uncompromising advocates, of the all-sufficiency of the Bible, as a rule of faith and duty. After years of patient endurance, we have succeeded in throwing off a yoke, which was by no means easy—a burden which was far from being light. We have emancipated ourselves, and our congregations, from a state of spiritual thralldom, and established our claim to those invaluable immunities wherewith Christ intended to make mankind free. *The privilege of free and fearless inquiry*, is the ground work of the church we are now preparing to build—and, “*Prove all things*,” will be the motto inscribed on its front, in characters of gold. “Call no man master,” we regard as the *Magna Charta* of our ecclesiastical constitution—Christ, and Christ only, is our king—the Bible, and the Bible only, is our accredited standard of belief. We do not associate as Calvinists, or Armenians—we do not associate as Unitarians, or Trinitarians: we are Presbyterians. To be enrolled as the first Moderator, chosen by a Synod formed on principles so truly evangelical as these, is a distinction highly gratifying—and which is duly appreciated by the individual on whom it has been conferred. Allow him, at the same time, to add, that he does not misconstrue the compliment—he knows well the feeling and motives by which it has been prompted—he knows that it is to be attributed, not to any meritorious services in his power to plead; but, purely and exclu-

sively, to that fraternal partiality, on the part of the donors, which has followed him all his life long—a consideration which increases his gratitude, whilst it represents his self estimation.

On a motion, that the Rev. Fletcher Blakely be requested to act as Clerk for the present meeting, it was suggested that Mr. Porter, who had so long and so ably discharged the office of Clerk to the Synod of Ulster, should be appointed as their permanent Clerk, and that Mr. Blakely be requested to act as Clerk *pro tempore*.

Mr. PORTER felt extremely gratified by their kindness; but, owing to his age, and his distance from the great body of his Remonstrant brethren, he would be better pleased that their choice should be fixed upon the gentleman whom they had selected for the year.

Mr. BLAKELY would have great pleasure in doing any thing that he could for his brethren; but he trusted they would prevail upon Mr. Porter to accept the situation; and he promised that he would be, at all times, ready to give Mr. Porter any assistance which might obviate his (Mr. P.'s) objection on the score of local inconvenience.

The conversation here dropped, and Mr. Blakely was requested to act as Clerk for the present year.

A roll was made out, and called over, when the following Ministers and Elders answered to their names:—

ARMAGH PRESBYTERY.

MINISTERS.

Sam. Arnold,
John Mitchel,
Arthur Neilson,
James Davis,
James Lunn,
Sam C. Neilson,

ELDERS.

Thomas Donnan.
James Lyle.
James Martin.
James C. Mulligan.
———
Robert Dickson.

BANGOR PRESBYTERY.

MINISTERS.

John Watson,
John Mulligan,
Henry Montgomery,
Fletcher Blakely,
David Whyte,

ELDERS.

John Miller.
Captain Stannus.
Wm. Hunter.
Gawin Orr,
John Stitt.

TEMPLEPATRICK PRESBYTERY.

MINISTERS.

Thomas Alexander,
Robt. Campbell,
Nath. Alexander,
Alex. Montgomery,
Wm. Glendy,
Wm. Porter,

ELDERS.

John Tweed.
James Blow.
Andrew Dickson.
Wm. Gibson.
Wm. A. M'Bride.
John Alexander.

The following resolutions were then put, *seriatim*, and unanimously agreed to :—

1. “ That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the only infallible rule of faith and duty, and contain all knowledge necessary to Salvation.”

2. “ That it is the inalienable right of every Christian to search these records of Divine Truth for his own instruction and guidance ; to form his own opinions with regard to what they teach, and to worship God with sincerity, agreeably to the dictates of his own conscience, without privation, penalty, or inconvenience, inflicted by his fellow-men.”



WEDNESDAY, MAY 26.—The Rev. JOHN MITCHEL preached from Matthew xxiii. 9. and 10. “ Call no man your Father on earth,” &c. He explained, in a long, argumentative, and eloquent discourse, the principles of Christian liberty, and applied those principles to the state of the Christian Churches in different countries and in different times, and particularly to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

On the conclusion of the sermon, the Synod resumed the consideration of the resolutions which had been read on Tuesday, and which passed unanimously.

3. “ That all exercise of Church power, which attaches rewards to the profession of one class of doctrines, and penalties to that of any other, is contrary to the Holy Scriptures, and directly calculated to undermine that sincerity, without which no profession of faith, or form of worship, can be acceptable unto God.”

4. “ That the imposition of human Tests, and Confessions of Faith, and the vain efforts of men to produce an unattainable uniformity of belief, have not only tended to encourage hypocrisy, but also to restrict the sacred right of private judgment,—to lessen the authority of the Scriptures,—to create unrighteous divisions amongst Christians,—to sanction the most barbarous persecutions,—to trench upon the natural and civil rights of men,—to place undue power in the hands of the few,—to throw a shield over the time server,—to expose the honest to injuries and persecutions,—to perpetuate errors in almost all churches,—and to prevent that free inquiry and discussion, which are essential to the extension of religious knowledge.”

5. “ That the Overtures of the General Synod of Ulster, passed in the year 1828, impose submission to human interpretations of the word of God, in a form more objectionable than has ever been attempted in any Church ; by subjecting Ministers to deposition, at any time, however acceptable and useful to their own people ; and by submitting Students and Licentiates to the absolute control of a secret committee, of whose principal proceedings no records are kept,

and who must necessarily be liable to act under the influence of personal partiality or prejudice, selfish interest or local connexions."

6. "That those Overtures not only subject Students, Licentiates, and Ministers, to possible injustice, and dangerous temptations, but likewise trench upon the most valuable privileges of the people, in the free election of their own Pastors; inasmuch as their choice is restricted to persons professing to hold opinions approved by the Committee of Examinators, although such opinions may be directly opposed to the views of sacred truth entertained by the congregations."

7. "That we consider those enactments as a violation of the fundamental principle of Protestantism, subversive of the liberal laws and usages of our Church, and a direct breach of the solemn compact under which those of us, who are Ministers, entered the Synod of Ulster."

8. "That, (having, ineffectually, endeavoured, for two years, to obtain a repeal, or even a modification of those obnoxious regulations,) we are now compelled, in obedience to the dictates of conscience—in vindication of our own rights—in support of the inalienable privileges of Students, Licentiates, Ministers, and Congregations—in defence of religious liberty, and to avoid being accessory to the suppression of what many of us believe to be the Truth of God—to separate ourselves from the Synod of Ulster, and to remain separated, until that Body shall have returned to the Scriptural principles and usages of Presbyterianism."

9. "That we now, in the name of the Great King and Head of the Church, and earnestly imploring the blessing of Almighty God, solemnly associate ourselves, under the designation of *The Remonstrant Synod of Ulster*—a designation to which we consider ourselves justly entitled, as faithfully adhering to the original principles—the solemnly enacted laws—and the salutary customs of our Church."

10. "That we adopt the Code of Discipline, sanctioned by the General Synod of Ulster, in 1825, as the law of Discipline in this Church: and, to show that we are not guided, in pursuing this course, by any view to promote the advancement of any set of Doctrinal Opinions, to the exclusion of others, we hereby publicly and solemnly guarantee to the Congregations which are under our care, and to those which may hereafter form a portion of our Church, the full, free, unrestricted exercise of their unquestionable right to elect, on all cases of vacancy, Ministers entertaining such views of Divine Truth, as the Congregations may themselves approve."

11. "That, to secure the exercise of this great privilege in its fullest extent, the Ministers and Licentiates of the Church of Scotland, of the Synod of Ulster, the Synod of Munster, and the Presbytery of Antrim, together with the Ministers and Licentiates of any other Protestant Churches, who may be sufficiently recommended to us by their character and talent, their education and their aptness to teach, shall be eligible to the vacant Congregations under our care."

12. "That, in order to cultivate, as far as lieth in us, a spirit of Christian liberality and good will, the Ministers of the religious Bodies referred to in the preceding Resolution, may, at all times, be invited to sit, and deliberate with us in our Church Courts, and to join with us in the affectionate intercourse of ministerial services and Christian communion."

The Synod adjourned till ten o'clock next day.

THURSDAY, MAY 27.—The Reports of the different Presbyteries were read, by which it appeared that several Students and Licentiates have attached themselves to the Remonstrant Synod.

Rev. Dr. Bruce, Mr. Bruce, Mr. Johnson, and Mr. Porter, of the Presbytery of Antrim, and Mr. Orr, of the General Synod, were requested to sit and deliberate with the Remonstrant Synod, and complied.

A memorial from the Congregation of Narrow-water was read, which excited a lively interest in a crowded and respectable audience. It contained statements of a very painful kind; and showed to what extent bigotry, ignorance, and hypocrisy will carry plans and schemes for the ruin of innocence, sincerity, and worth. The exemplary and talented Minister, the Rev. S. Arnold, and his peaceable congregation, have, it appears, been much annoyed for some time past, by persons of various communions forcing their way into the Meeting-house,—breaking locks,—preaching from seats,—pretending to pray and sing psalms, and disturbing, even with the *Bible* in their hands, persons of the most peaceable demeanour. What renders these disgraceful proceedings more lamentable is, that *Probationers* of the General Synod, countenanced by stated *Pastors*, have lent a helping hand. From evidence of a highly respectable kind, and from letters which had been written by Calvinistic Ministers to their emissaries at Warrenpoint, it was evident that the most base and vile measures have been resorted to, ever since Mr. Arnold *refused* to take the *human, mysterious, and perplexing Test*, which frightened the majority of the Protestant Presbyterian Synod of Ulster; and to which, after hard struggles, between the rights of conscience on the one hand, and the power of interest and fear on the other, they at last bowed their necks.

The Remonstrant Synod took up this business with a truly dignified and christian spirit. Messrs. Lunn, Glendy, Mitchel, H. Montgomery, and Blakely, made a deep impression upon a feeling and enlightened audience. It was finally agreed to—"That we deeply sympathise with our injured brother, the Rev. Samuel Arnold, and the congregation of Narrow-water, under the disgraceful injuries and persecutions to which they have been subjected, by certain Ministers of the General Synod of Ulster and others:—and we hereby pledge ourselves to afford them all the legal and christian aid in our power, in the vindication of their rights. The Presbytery of Armagh, under our fullest sanction, are authorized to take such steps as to them may seem advisable for carrying our friendly purpose into effect.

The sermons preached on the occasion were luminous and powerful; and the following resolution was passed by the Synod:—"Moved, and unanimously agreed to, that the Rev. H. Montgomery and the Rev. J. Mitchel be requested to publish the valuable discourses which they delivered at this meeting of Synod."

After passing different justly merited encomiums on Mr. Porter, the Moderator, on Mr. Mitchel, of Newry, Mr. Blakely, of Moneyrea, and others, for their uniform, able, and eloquent support of the true principles of Protestantism, Mr. Glendy proposed the following well earned vote of thanks:—"Moved, that the most cordial thanks of this Synod are due, and are hereby given, to our talented friend and brother, the Rev. Henry Montgomery, for his powerful and zealous advocacy, his unremitting and generous exertions, and for the valuable services which he has rendered to the Remonstrant cause."

Mr. Montgomery, in rising to make a reply, burst into tears, and failed in the attempt. He sat down, prevented, in a great measure, by his feelings, from uttering his sentiments. We could only collect the following sentence—Moderator, I could have met my opponents with firm nerves, but, I confess, that I am totally unable to bear up under this expression of kindness on the part of my justly esteemed and long tried friends. I shall, however, endeavour, by my future life, to render those substantial thanks, which I cannot now find words to express.

After this a vote of thanks was unanimously agreed to, for the friendly accommodation, and kind attention which the Remonstrants had experienced from the Ministers and people of the first and second Presbyterian Congregations of Belfast.

A letter, of a very flattering kind, from the Bolton District Unitarian Association, was read, and the Moderator was requested to write a reply in the name of the Synod. Mr. H. Montgomery and Mr. Blakely here referred to several letters which they had received from various parts of the United Kingdom, and from persons of different religious opinions, in which aid was offered to, and sympathy expressed for, the Remonstrants.

Five overtures, of a very interesting nature, (many useful observations being made) were agreed to by the Synod. One of the most important of the five, was brought forward by John Alexander, of Newtownlimavady, and Leonard Dobbin, of Armagh, Esquires, and received with very lively interest, for the purpose of raising a *Presbyterian Fund*, the interest of which shall be applied—for the encouragement and support of injured, or persecuted Ministers—the assistance of new Congregations—the endowment of a Professorship of Divinity—and other purposes connected with the maintenance of Christian rights.

A vote of thanks to the Synod of Munster, for their ardent, efficient, and generous exertions on behalf of the Remonstrants, made the substance of another overture.

The Synod separated at five o'clock, having fixed to hold their next stated meeting in Dr. Ledlie's meeting-house, Larne, on the third Tuesday of July, 1831, and having appointed Mr. Blakely, of Moneyrea, to preach on the second day of the meeting.

During the three days of the Remonstrant Synod, there was a vast number of valuable and instructive remarks made by the members; and a delighted and highly respectable audience attended regularly, and listened attentively, from session to session.

The Rev. John M'Cance, of Comber, and his respectable Congregation, have received a visit from the Dromore Presbytery, which has opened the eyes of some people who had formerly overlooked with indifference, the Synodical Overtures of 1828. The visit was unasked and unnecessary, as Mr. M'Cance and his people were in perfect harmony. But lest any degree of heresy should steal in among them, the Presbytery of Dromore thought it necessary to give them a friendly call, to adjure two of the elders, and catechise them at length, respecting the religious opinions of their aged Minister. The elders *submitted* to be adjured, though they had preferred no complaint against the Minister, nor the Minister against the elders! A puzzling match was kept up for many hours in the Meeting-house,—some people went away disgusted,—many wondered at the proceeding,—and all departed little wiser than they entered. The Presbytery differed, disagreed, and disputed about the questions, and the Moderator refused to administer the oaths. Of this meeting more *new light* shall be sent forward.

Lectures.

We understand that a Series of Lectures, to be delivered in the Meeting-house of the First Presbyterian Congregation, Holywood, will commence on Sunday evening, 27th inst. at Six o'clock, and be conducted by the Rev. Mr. Johnson, and some of the Ministers of Belfast and neighbourhood. The spirit of enquiry, and the desire for information on religious subjects, are thus every day becoming more apparent; and the interest excited by the Lectures now going forward in the Meeting-house of the First Presbyterian Congregation of this town, has extended to different quarters, and we trust will be productive of the happiest consequences.

Correspondents.

As Mnason's communication is dated from Belfast, we would advise him to attend the Lecture to be delivered in the Meeting-house, of the First Presbyterian Congregation, on Sunday Evening, the 20th instant, where we hope he will receive satisfactory information on the subject of his question.

G. F. on Religious Publications must be farther postponed for want of room. The continuation of "Sigma," and also of "The Westminster Assembly," in our next.

Mr. Campbell's reply to the author of "The Broken Tombstone," in the 7th Number of "The Orthodox Presbyterian," came too late for consideration—as did many other valuable communications. We shall give them all due attention in proper time.

THE
Bible Christian.

No. VI.

JULY, 1830.

VOL. I.

SYNODICAL OVERTURES.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 166.)

IN a former communication, the following points, amongst others, were, I trust, satisfactorily established :—

1st. That, as there are different degrees of credibility, it is a duty incumbent on us, as fallible creatures, to proportion our confidence in the truth, and our zeal for the propagation of each particular article of religious belief, to the degree of Scriptural testimony by which it is sustained.

2d. That articles of belief, which it has been found impracticable to express in the words of the Bible, cannot justly be represented as *declared* in the Bible.

3d. That articles of belief which are not plainly declared in the Bible, though they may possibly, or even probably be true, yet, as they do not rest on the surest possible foundation, ought not to be enforced as terms of Christian communion.

I shall now endeavour to bring these principles to bear on the Synodical Overtures of 1828. To go over the *four* standard doctrines established by those regulations, would be tedious and unnecessary : let us take as a specimen, the first, and most important—I mean the Trinity.

Against the credibility of this article of faith, there exists in the nature of things, a strong antecedent presumption. That three *distinct persons*, each of whom is by himself a perfect God, should nevertheless make only one perfect God when combined, is a thing which I am not now called on to deny, but which certainly appears, at first view, exceedingly improbable. It appeared so to Bishop Beveridge. “ That *one* should be perfectly *three*,” says this decided Athanasian, “ and *three* perfectly *one* : that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost should be three, and yet but one—but one, and yet three!!! O!

heart-amazing, thought-devouring, inconceivable mystery!!! * * * Because no creature can possibly conceive *how* it can be true, I therefore believe that it *is* true."

I will by no means affirm that this presumption against the triune creed, is so very strong as not to be removable by evidence, but I do say, that nothing but evidence of a very convincing kind will be sufficient for the purpose. The Scripture proofs must be clear, and cogent, and incontrovertible, in proportion to the intrinsic improbability of the fact to be established. As Gerard has observed in his institutes, no *essential* articles of religion can be safely rested on a single text—because it is reasonable to suppose that every *essential* doctrine will be laid down by more writers, and on more occasions than one. A dogma, approaching so nearly to absolute incredibility,—apparently so inconsistent with the unity of divine nature,—and, if true, so vitally important, must, therefore, be supported by plain, incontestible, and reiterated declarations of Holy Writ. Can such testimony be adduced in favour of the Trinity? No. The only proofs which its advocates even pretend to advance, are *hints* which *we* think obscure; intimations which *we* think ambiguous; and deductions which *we* think fanciful; and which are founded on texts that are either spurious or doubtful. The doctrine is defined with legal precision in the shorter catechism; and the definition has been adopted by the Ministers and Elders of the Synod of Ulster. They have told us very distinctly that there are "Three Persons in the Godhead; and that these *three* persons are *one God*, the same in substance, equal in power and glory." This the Synod has told in the words of man—but if the most learned member of that most learned assembly, will just tell us the same thing in the words of Scripture, he will put an end to the controversy. The Trinitarian assures us, that the existence of a triplicity in the divine nature was taught, and taught most clearly, by the Evangelists and Apostles. If so—how was it expressed by *them*? State the fact in *their* language. Communicate it to us in the terms which *they* employed when communicating it to mankind; and we ask no more. Reader, if you are an honest Athanasian, look over the account of the Trinity given by the Westminster Divines, and try to mention the same particulars

in the phraseology of the Bible. If you fail, apply to your minister and mark the result.

Our brethren are constrained to acknowledge, that the task now proposed is one which cannot be achieved. Hear the admission made by Mr. Carlile—an admission, in which he is joined by Dr. Chalmers, and all candid defenders of the Calvinistic faith. In pages 369 and 370 of his *Work on the Deity, &c.* after confessing that the Trinity is a mere deduction from Scriptural declarations, he adds—“I admit, that a doctrine of inference *ought never to be placed on a footing of equality with a direct and explicit revelation.*” * * * * “That the Holy Spirit is a distinct person from the Father and the Son, seems to me to be removed *one* step from a direct explicit revelation.” * * * * “That there are three persons in the Godhead, is a *second* remove from direct explicit revelation,” &c. &c. (In other words the tri-unity of the Deity, is not barely an inference, but an inference drawn from an inference.) Mr. Carlile goes on—“This statement may not appear satisfactory to some of my orthodox friends, who, perhaps, will expect that I should follow an example too generally given—of *becoming confident in assertion, in proportion to my want of evidence.* But that I cannot do. I will be as confident as I believe the Scripture warrants me, but *I will not explicitly assert what is not explicitly asserted in the word of God.*”

When about to enter on the great question of the Trinity, Mr. Carlile acknowledges, “that he is entering on the region of reasoning and inference;” * * * “that he has passed the last lamp that has been lighted up to direct his way;” “that he is in danger of losing himself in thick darkness, as many others have done—and that he is, therefore, determined to proceed with caution and diffidence.” These are his very words. So much for profession. Now for practice. In what *way* has he evinced the timidity, candour, and moderation, which he has thus prettily expressed? Why, by being one of the foremost to rush forward and barricade the doors of the Presbyterian Church against all, who may dare to utter those doubts which *he himself* entertains—who may hesitate to profess their firm belief in a doctrine about which he himself is not certain; or decline to vouch with confidence, for that trinity in unity, which he himself “will not explicitly assert, because it is not

explicitly asserted in the word of God." When Mr Carlile is called on to *prove* the prominent and fundamental article of his creed, he is all modesty and bashfulness. A slight deficiency of Scriptural authority—a want of perfectly *conclusive* evidence, he acknowledges, so readily and ingenuously, that the bystanders feel a prepossession in his favour, and are disposed to think that the opinion to which a man so cautious and impartial has ultimately inclined, is very likely to be well founded. Thus diffident and irresolute is Mr. Carlile, when required to establish the Trinity by *arguments from the word of God*—but no sooner has he an opportunity of enforcing it by the brute argument of ecclesiastical power, than all his hesitancy is laid aside, and he will suffer none to enter the church who are not better at believing than he is himself.

Since the Trinity is an article of faith utterly incomprehensible, and intrinsically improbable; since it has not been explicitly communicated to mankind; since it rests for proof, not on the Scriptures, but on corollaries *alleged* to be deduced from the Scriptures; since the correctness of those deductions has been denied by many of the most pious and learned men that ever studied the sacred volumes; and since, in fine, “a doctrine of inference ought never to be placed on an equality with a doctrine of direct revelation,”—have the framers of the Overtures acted either wisely or well, in making the tenet in question a fundamental part of their system; and refusing to recognize as brethren all such persons as cannot bring themselves to a decided conviction of its truth? They acknowledge in words that they *may* be wrong, and they have acted as if they were infallible. By exercising a rigour beyond the law; by prescribing terms of communion which have not been prescribed by Christ, or his Apostles; by insisting on points not clearly revealed, but confessedly doubtful—how much misery and mischief have they wrought in the once peaceful Synod of Ulster? The religious rancour which they have made it their meat and their drink to excite, has poisoned some of the sweetest charities of social and domestic life. In numberless instances, the harmony of the family circle has been destroyed. Brother has been turned against brother, and the father has met with foes amongst those of his own household. Neighbours, who

grew up from childhood together—who used to exchange warm and kindly greetings in the market-place, and to take sweet counsel as they walked in company to the house of God—now pass each other by, with scowling or averted looks. Congregations, heretofore peaceful, united, and happy, are either rent asunder, or disturbed by angry disputations, about questions which few of the litigants are capable of understanding. Many a conscientious and useful Minister, in whose preaching and carriage no change whatever has taken place—who once had the prospect of ending his days in tranquillity and comfort—and whose innocent boast it was, that he enjoyed the esteem and affection of his flock—now rises each morning from a sleepless couch, with feelings wounded, and a heart weighed down by the vulgar and senseless clamour which has been raised against him, and by the consequent alienation of individuals, whose kindness was for years a cordial to his spirits. But far more bitter than these, are the regrets which a far more numerous class of Ministers have been made to endure—Ministers, of amiable dispositions, and in whom the virtuous principle is by no means extinct, though their integrity unfortunately gave way under the sore trial to which it was wantonly and cruelly subjected—Ministers, who, rather than expose their beloved wives and children to poverty, perhaps to destruction, were tempted in a moment of weakness, to profess solemnly with their lips, a creed which they did not believe in their hearts, and who have since been suffering the gnawings of remorse. That such *are*, and are not *few* in number, the imposers of the Trinitarian declaration know right well. At the very time they were bringing forward that odious measure, they knew that they were laying “birdlime and Idean pitch,” to entangle the souls of their brethren. They stood composedly looking on, whilst the Test was taken by divers individuals, of whose insincerity they were morally assured. This some of the inquisitors have subsequently been heard to acknowledge. How they could stand by, and behold a fellow-creature, more weak than wicked, coming forward with bloodless countenance and agitated nerves, to undergo the degrading ordeal—coming forward like a condemned malefactor, to have his faith screwed and stretched to the precise extent of the rack constructed for that purpose by the Procrustes of

the Synod—how they could witness such a spectacle, without calling aloud for the immediate cessation of proceedings, so inhuman, so unhallowed, and so utterly incompetent to answer the end for which they were ostensibly instituted, must be matter of astonishment to all “who are destitute of vital godliness,” and “unrenewed in the spirit of their minds.”

Had you Scripture authority to adduce for the conditions of communion, on which you have insisted; or were you even able to show that the imposition of these conditions was at all likely to answer the end professedly in view, your conduct would assume a justifiable complexion: But, if neither of these two points can be made good, then the exaction of such terms of Christian fellowship, is altogether indefensible. That you have no Scripture authority for making belief in the doctrines of the Trinity, Original Sin, &c. &c. a necessary qualification for Church membership, has been demonstrated in Number I. of this communication; of course, the only plausible vindication of your proceedings must rest on the second point which has been mentioned—namely, their efficiency to bring about that uniformity of belief which you represent as desirable. If they are *obviously* inadequate to effect this purpose, then they are useless, and dangerous experiments on conscience—unwarranted and insidious temptations to what may be termed “lying unto God.” I am aware that their conduciveness to sameness of creed, supposing it could be shown, would, of itself, be no sufficient reason for their adoption; but, conscious of the firmness of the ground on which my cause stands, I am anxious to make every demandable concession. Now, the real influence of the Test, and the Overtures, in securing the unanimity aimed at, depends entirely on a circumstance which you always silently assume, but which you have never yet established, or even ventured directly to assert. It is incumbent on you to prove, that all Ministers of Synod now in existence, and all who may hereafter become Ministers, or candidates for the Ministry, are, and will for ever continue to be, Israelites without guile—men of incorruptible integrity—men not to be induced by any earthly consideration, to say the thing which they do not think. Establish this point, and you stand on ground comparatively firm: until you do so, you are floundering in a

quagmire—your arguments are all founded on a false principle.

Gentlemen, I must now press a little more closely on your quarters. The point on which you are now to be assailed, has already been slightly adverted to. Had *you yourselves* been sincerely persuaded that the late conscience-cutting regulations were calculated to effect the purposes professedly in view—had you been persuaded of their tendency to vindicate the Synod from the imputation of concealed Arianism, and to produce among its members real uniformity of sentiment, the rectitude of your intention might have served as an apology for the errors of your conduct; but *you were perfectly aware* that the measures adopted would be altogether inadequate to accomplish these, or any other objects, which could, even by Trinitarians, be deemed beneficial. You did not require to be informed, that when temporal emoluments are at issue, religious Tests, whilst they may operate as a grievance on conscientious men, present no impediment whatever to sanctimonious pharisees,—that they are nets which will never catch a knave. You did not require to be informed, that, whilst they bear hard on the sincere, the steady, and the disinterested, they make hypocrites of the weak, the unprincipled, and the worldly-minded. You knew that the church of England can boast the diversified advantages of a “Popish liturgy, a Calvinistic creed, and an Arminian Clergy.” You knew that in this latter establishment, every candidate for ordination, solemnly declares that he “is inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost,” to take on him the sacred office. With respect to the Trinitarian Test, you knew that by an avowal of their real sentiments, many Ministers would inevitably incur popular opprobrium, and worldly loss; and that they were consequently placed under a powerful temptation, to deal deceitfully with their own souls; and yet with a perfect knowledge of all these facts, you forced on your abominable plans.

Never did man exist more thoroughly convinced of the utter uselessness, nay, of the pernicious tendency of formal declarations of religious belief, than is Mr. Carile. In a sermon published in 1826, he states it as “the conviction of his deliberate judgment, that the compulsory measures employed by ecclesiastical bodies for securing uniformity of doctrine, have increased the evil

which they were intended to prevent." Yet in 1827, he himself was so mean-spirited as to take a *viva voce* Test in open Synod; and in 1828, he, with *uniform inconsistency*, lent his aid to the suspension of a similar millstone around the necks of all intrants into the Ministry.—Hearken also to the *words* of Mr. Cooke: "Were a man to sign a Confession of Faith over and over again, I should not consider him one whit better qualified for the Ministerial office than before his signature." That the great leader was equally conscious of the total inadequacy of the VERBAL declaration which was extorted in Strabane and Cookstown, I shall now *prove* by *facts*. The meeting of Synod in the former town happened to be attended by three Ministers bearing the same name. By one of these, the Test was taken; the other two refused. The gentleman who took the Test, having shortly afterwards learnt that he was in danger of being confounded with his recusant namesakes, embraced the earliest opportunity of marking the necessary distinction: "Let it be kept in mind," said he, "by the Synod, and the public, that I took the Test." "True;" said Mr. Cooke, starting on his legs, "I know you did; and I will not say that you are unsound in the faith, but I do say, that *your* orthodoxy is very different from *my* orthodoxy." This shows the opinion entertained by the "Seraphic Doctor," of the purifying efficacy of his patent prescription.

In a letter written with his own hand, and which can at any time be produced, Mr. Cooke expresses his conviction, that *Atheism* is to be found among the most active promoters of his favourite measures. Mr. Glendy has stated in the public papers, that he has the letter in safe keeping, and "The Doctor" has hitherto preserved a discreet silence on the subject. What are we to think of the common men belonging to the army of the faithful, if those redoubtable heroes, who may be denominated the "Life Guards of Orthodoxy," have not altogether escaped the contagion of infidelity? But what is rank infidelity, when compared with the crime of believing that there is only "one God and one Mediator between God and man!"

That formal declarations of belief are incompetent to produce that unanimity for the sake of which they are required, has been so often demonstrated, that, for the present at least, I deem it unnecessary to argue the ques-

tion. My object is to show, and the facts just stated do, I think, show most clearly, that Mr. Cooke and his friends were convinced of this truth—were secretly conscious that the measures which they insisted on as things of soul-saving importance, were, to all intents and purposes, useless, and worse than useless. Those gentlemen may talk as they please, and endeavour to hoodwink an uninformed populace, but, by their *conduct*, they have unequivocally, though unintentionally, discovered, that in their hearts they regard a profession of faith as a very deceptive indication of internal sentiment; and, of course, as altogether incompetent to that accordance for the sake of which it is ostensibly required. The imposition of the Test, and the enactment of the Overtures, were, therefore, deeds of pure and disinterested wickedness, and capricious cruelty, on the part of those with whom they originated; knowing, as they did, the real sentiments of their brethren.

Suppose that Fletcher Blakely had, for once, laid aside his integrity, and professed himself a believer in the Trinity, how would the members of the Sanhedrim have acted? Well they know that he does not give credence to the doctrine. Yet they must have allowed him to pass muster, as they allowed other men of straw; and so that arch-unitarian would this day have been enrolled in the ranks of the faithful. By practising falsehood and hypocrisy, he would have made himself meet for communion with the Synod of Ulster; whereas, by acting the part of an honest man, he has rendered himself unworthy of fellowship with that immaculate body. Had he chosen to whitewash his conscience and his creed, it is possible he might have been charged with inconsistency by some of his former associates. But all such impertinent mementoes he might at once have quashed, by means of “The Doctor’s” ever ready, and universally applicable salve. Might not the renegado have said—“The reproach is just. The fact I would fondly have concealed, but now that concealment is no longer possible, I confess that for many years of my life I did entertain Unitarian sentiments—those sentiments, however, I have now renounced—I loathe them, I abhor them. With shame and sorrow I declare, that they have left a stain of guilt upon my soul which nothing but the precious blood of Christ can ever wash away.”

But if the measures in question had no tendency, and were well known to have no tendency to ascertain the real opinions of men, yet there is a purpose which they were calculated, and apparently intended to serve—I mean the vile purpose of deception. They were almost avowedly introduced to make the Synod appear what it *was* not, what it *is* not, and what it never *can* be. Had the authors of them possessed candour, they would have thus spoken: “We do differ, and we know that we shall continue to differ, on certain doctrinal points; but we will hang out false colours to the world; we will throw dust into the eyes of the multitude, and make them believe that we are much more orthodox than we really are: and of what comparative consequence can it be, if we endanger the salvation of a few souls, provided we can conceal our rottenness as a church.”—Reader—is it not shocking to think, or will you believe me when I declare, that this shameful, hypocritical farce—this infamous attempt to practise deception on the public, by causing weak-minded men to make shipwreck of a good conscience, has been eulogized by teachers of the Gospel, as a renovation of vital godliness—a work of sanctification—a blessed purification of the Synod. Yes; the Synod has indeed been purified. That venerable assembly is no longer contaminated by the presence of *honest* Unitarians; but that it has not been cleansed from Unitarians of a different character, I shall now show, by a statement more decidedly convincing than any which has yet been submitted to the public.

Previously to the Inquisition which was commenced at the meeting of Synod in 1827, and completed the year following,* Mr. Cooke happened to be examined on oath before the Education Commissioners. In the course of the examination, he said, that from a special scrutiny of the list of the Synod, he computed the number of its Arian Ministers at 35—(he had not been able to estimate 40)—besides some others whom he described as neutral. Being farther interrogated, he admitted that the anti-Trinitarians constituted about one fifth part of the whole association. (*See 4th Report, pages 146*

* In arguing against the Test, I argue against the Overtures.—They stand on the same principle—and the latter will operate on candidates, precisely as the former operated on Ministers.

and 154.) Most sincerely do I acquit Mr. Cooke of wilful error; but it is generally allowed, and from *personal* knowledge I could testify, that he very considerably underrated the Unitarians at that time connected with the Synod. But let us take the case on his own showing. When Mr. Cooke was examined, the Presbyterian body consisted of 203 Ministers; when the late separation took place, it had increased to 219. (*See Minutes, 1820.*) Of those 203 Ministers, according to Mr. Cooke's own scale of computation, one fifth part were unsound in the faith. Now, admitting for argument's sake the correctness of this estimate, and even granting that *all* the clergymen who have withdrawn from the Synod are Unitarians, which in truth they are not, still I establish my position, by the following plain arithmetical statement:

Unsound 1-5th of 203 Members (I say)	...	...	41
Deduct supposed unsound ditto, actually withdrawn			17

Rotten remnant still in connexion with the Synod	...	24
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I do in my soul believe, that there are twice twenty-four anti-Trinitarian Ministers still enrolled in the catalogue of the Orthodox; but according to the very lowest calculation, the reader has now before him in figures, a statement which will enable him to determine how far the recent proceedings have been effectually operative in purifying the Synod from heterodoxy. The number of Ministers who openly *avowed* Unitarianism, was so comparatively small, that I refrain from stating it. The statement would present a mournful and mortifying subject of reflection. For each New-Light Member compelled by conscience to withdraw from the Synod, that assembly has *made* and still retains *three* mean-spirited and unprincipled time-servers. This is one way of promoting the moral and religious respectability of the Body.

SIGMA.

(To be continued.)

SCRIPTURE ITS OWN INTERPRETER.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 221.)

PHIL. i. 8.—“For God is my record how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.”

— 11.—Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are *by Jesus Christ* unto the *glory and praise of God*.”

— ii. 5.—11.—“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. *Wherefore God* also hath highly *exalted him*, and *given him a name* which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth: and that every tongue should confess that *Jesus Christ is Lord*, to the *glory of God the Father*.”

— iii. 3.—“For we are the circumcision which *worship God* in the Spirit, and *rejoice in Christ Jesus*.”

— 14.—“I press toward the mark for the prize of the high-calling of *God in Christ Jesus*.”

— iv. 7.—“And the *peace of God* which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds *through Christ Jesus*.”

— 19.—“But my *God* shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory *by Christ Jesus*.”

— 20.—“Now unto *God and our Father* be glory for ever and ever.—Amen.”

In this Epistle there is a remarkable passage, viz. c. ii. 5. that has given occasion to much controversy. The chief cause of difficulty lies in the occurrence of a word (*arpagmon*) that is so very rare as hardly to be found except in this passage, and may be active or passive in its meaning. It appears clearly to me that the received translation is wrong—“Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery [but his own lawful right] to be equal with God.” This is obviously the way that you would expect the antithesis to be filled up, if this version were correct; and thus the contrast, really intended in the following verse, would be lost. Whereas if you interpret thus “who being [or although he was,] in a form of God, [and therefore under strong temptation to claim equality or likeness] did not think the being equal to God a thing to be snatched at, or seized upon by him; but humbled himself, &c.” You have the contrast exact and beautifully adapted to the arguments of Paul. Again, Paul’s object was to show in a strong point of view the

humility of Christ: but this does not appear from the received translation. The object of the Apostle would be best attained by representing his prior state as high as possible: for the higher he was before he came, the greater his humility and condescension in coming. If he had been Lord God Almighty—Supreme over all—Paul would have said so: for nothing could have so enhanced the value of his humbling himself to appear in the form of a servant. Instead of this, Paul merely says, “being in a form of God,” [or a divine form,] and supposing the Arian interpretation to be correct, it makes the whole passage consistent with itself; and the argument clear and strong—“who being in a divine form [and thus having it in his power to exalt himself in the estimation of man and be esteemed to be God himself] did not consider the equality with God to be a thing that he should endeavour to seize, but emptied himself even of that divine form which he had.” The whole force of the argument depends upon our Lord having it in his power to magnify himself as God on the one hand, and to humble himself as man on the other: and this so exactly corresponds with his having a rank between Almighty God and man, as to prove almost to a demonstration that the Arian view is right. If this required confirmation, the remainder of the Epistle contains it. For this Jesus was *exalted* for his *obedience*: now, obedience implies inferiority in the person obeying; and exaltation requires some higher point to be exalted to: both, therefore, agree with our Saviour’s being in a station inferior to the Father whom he obeyed; and admitting of his being exalted to greater power and more extensive dominion in reward of his obedience. In this exalted state, too, Paul calls him “Lord;” and directs us, even in so doing, to have a reference to the “glory of God the Father.”

For further information on this passage, your readers may consult Dr. Bruce’s sermon upon it, and Notes T and U, in the Belfast edition of Price’s sermons.

· COLOSSIANS i. 1.—“Paul an Apostle of *Jesus Christ*, by the will of *God*.”

—— 2.—“Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord *Jesus Christ*.”

—— 3.—“We give thanks to God, and the Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*.”

Col. i. 12, 13, 15, 19.—Giving thanks unto the Father..... who.....hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son..... who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers: all things were created by him and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.

— ii. 9.—“ For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”

— 12.—“ Buried with him, *i. e.* Christ, in baptism, wherein also ye are arisen with him, through the faith of the operation of God who raised him from the dead.”

— iii. 1.—“ Where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.”

— 17.—“ Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”

The passages quoted from this Epistle seem to be an exact statement of the Arian scheme; distinctly expressing the supremacy of the Father, and that he is the object of worship: the pre-existence of Christ, and his being the instrument of the Father in the creation of the world: the communication of the most precious blessings through him: his exaltation to the right hand of God, and that we should offer our religious services in his name. All these points seem to be set forth with very great perspicuity in this Epistle to the Colossians. If the phrase “first born of every creature” be the true translation, the text is decisive on the question. If the meaning be “born before the creation,” as some pretend; the question naturally occurs: would Paul have ever thought of saying of an Almighty Being, infinite and eternal, merely that he was born before the creation? Would it not sound very like dishonouring or blaspheming the Almighty for any among us merely to say of him that we believe he came into being before any creature? and if this would be a dishonouring of the Eternal Being, must it not be equally so of any other Being, that is equally and essentially eternal—if I may use such words, which, however in themselves absurd, the orthodox hypothesis renders necessary.

I THES. i. 1.—“ Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians, which is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

THES. i. 3.—“Remembering.....your patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father,”

—— 9. 10.—“How ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for *his Son from Heaven*, whom *he raised* from the dead, even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come.”

—— iii. 11.—“Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ direct our way unto you.”

—— 13.—“To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.”

—— iv. 14.—“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which *sleep in Jesus will God bring with him*.”

—— 16.—“For the *Lord himself* shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.”

—— v. 9.—“For *God* hath not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation by *our Lord Jesus Christ*.”

—— 18.—“In every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

—— 23.—“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The formation of the Christian Church at Thessalonica is mentioned in ACTS xvii. “Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Appollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews; and Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead, and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ.” This, if we can trust the veracity of St. Luke, is the sum and substance of Paul’s preaching there; and there is not a glimpse of a Trinity of persons in one God to be discerned. From Thessalonica he went to Berea---thence to Athens, and thence to Corinth, and it was from this last place that he wrote to the Thessalonians, on the return of Silas and Timothy from Macedonia. If Paul had not fully explained, during his stay, the leading doctrines of the Gospel, this was the time to supply the omission: for he was now writing to Christians, to whom he was bound to explain the mysteries of Christianity. Is there then in this Epistle any instruction, advice, or exhortation, enforcing the doctrine of the Trinity, presupposing it already known, or alluding to it in any manner whatever? Not one syllable from beginning to end.

Nor is it that there was no opportunity of introducing this doctrine. Quite the contrary. No less than fourteen times in a short letter of less than four pages, does Paul mention the Father and Jesus Christ together, and in no one of these fourteen instances does he use the language of the Litany of the Church of England—"God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost:" but invariably appropriates the term God to the Father, and uses the term Lord to our Saviour. Can we have stronger evidence of what was the sentiment in Paul's mind. Could Paul have received it as his great commission, to preach that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and in fourteen instances in which he introduces their names in various ways never allude, in the most distant manner, to their co-equality? Is this like that Paul who taught the Gentiles in faith and verity—who was not ashamed of the testimony of his Lord, but knew in whom he believed; who gloried in having fought a good fight, finished his course and kept the faith, so that there was laid up for him a crown of righteousness, to be given at the day of his appearing—that Paul with whom the Lord stood, and whom he strengthened, that by him the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear.

The Epistle commences: "Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the Church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." How easy and natural was it to have substituted these words "from God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, who are three persons in one God for ever." Nay, if this had been the doctrine that these men were daily and hourly proclaiming to the world, it is morally impossible they should have stopped where they did, or used the language that prevails in this Epistle. Far, far, indeed, did those great men fall short of the zeal and piety of divines of modern times, who cannot read a short psalm of David (perhaps a psalm heaping down curses on the head of his enemies,) without attaching a doxology to the end of it—"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end:" or sing a verse of a hymn without adding another such as "To

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—the God whom we adore : Be Glory as it was, is now ; and shall be evermore.”

In the 2d v. Paul (as for the sake of brevity I will call the author, though it is a joint Epistle,) says, “ We give thanks to *God always* for you all.” Now whom does he mean by God in this verse : surely the same God mentioned in the preceding, viz. God the Father. It is to God the Father then, and not to the holy and undivided Trinity, that he gave thanks, and observe that he gave thanks *always*, or on all occasions. What was the subject of their thanksgiving ; was it what might rivet their attention more particularly upon the Father of all for some blessing more peculiarly his ? Not at all. The subject of their thankfulness had a tendency to make Christ the more immediate object of their attention. It was for the patience of hope (*i. e.* steadfastness with which they trusted) in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father, that they gave thanks always.

Again, in the 9th verse, “ For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to *wait for his Son from Heaven whom he raised from the dead. Even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come.*” We may sometimes see how completely all meaning will be abstracted from the words on this theory : as in the 14th verse of the 4th chapter, “ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again : even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” *i. e.* For if we believe that God died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in God, will God bring with God.

Let me now advert to the only expression in the Epistle, that can be wrested to turn you from the true faith. The Gospel is called the Gospel of God, and it is called the Gospel of Christ---therefore God and Christ are the same. But can those who are trained throughout their whole lives to refer all things to the Author of every good and every perfect gift be stunned at such expressions ? Did not God send Christ ? Did not Christ give us the Gospel ? Is it not to God then that we are ultimately indebted for all the blessings of salvation ? Further Paul calls it *his* Gospel, Rom. ii. 16. “ In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus

Christ, according to *my* Gospel." Is Paul then a portion of the Deity---yet this Gospel of God, and Gospel of Christ, is also the Gospel of Paul---aye, and it is the Gospel of Peter, and the Gospel of every one that preached it. In the same Epistle, xvi. 25. Paul says again, "Now to him that is of power to establish you according to *my* Gospel. In the 5th verse of chapter 1, he calls it *our* Gospel, *i. e.* the Gospel of Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus.

Consider briefly what has been said, and see whether in this instance a case is made out, that Paul's doctrine, in this Epistle, does not only not contradict, but perfectly harmonize with what we are told of his preaching in the Acts. Neither in the passage of the Acts, nor in this Epistle, is there the slightest allusion to a holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God. Now supposing Paul, and Silas, and Timothy, to know and be fully impressed with the truth, fit for the important office imposed upon them, anxious to explain and enforce what they knew to be essential to the eternal interests of their hearers: supposing this, and it is a moderate supposition enough, I then say that it is unparalleled in the history of the human mind, that they should write a joint Epistle, in which they would dwell on so many other topics and not at all on this: that they should feel that the happiness of eternity to every one of their correspondents depended on their knowing that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were co-equal in power, wisdom, eternity, immensity, and every other attribute; and in fourteen instances in their letter in which they have occasion to mention them together, invariably ascribe superiority to the Father, and inferiority to the Son---call the Father God, and the Son Lord, and make no mention of the Holy Ghost in conjunction with the Father and the Son: and where they knew that all *three* were equally objects of prayer and praise, tell the Thessalonians that it was to this God, the Father, to whom they always gave thanks.

There is not a mathematical proposition in Euclid more clearly demonstrated to me, than is this moral proposition, that when the Epistle to the Thessalonians was written, Paul, Silas, and Timothy had no more idea of a Trinity in Unity than the child unborn.

EREUNETES.

NOTICE OF RELIGIOUS PUBLICATIONS.

Recollections of Jotham Anderson, and Discourses on the Offices and Character of Jesus Christ. By the Rev. Henry Ware, junior, Boston.

These two valuable little volumes have been lately introduced into this country, from America, and afford additional evidence of the rapid progress of Gospel Truth, in that free, and, in many respects, highly favoured country. Open and unshackled discussion has there produced its natural and legitimate effects. In no other nation are there exhibited more revolting displays of the degrading consequences of blind fanaticism, and in no other country have the truths of pure and enlightened Christianity met with so cordial and general a reception. To what cause can we attribute two such very opposite effects but to this, that in America religious truth has to make its way by its own merits; its importance is not estimated either by the degree in which it coincides with the articles of a state religion, or by the nearness with which it approximates to the *private judgment* of a select committee of reverend inquisitors. And what has been the consequence? We find that although novelty has led some to abuse the precious privilege of unrestrained religious freedom, yet that the majority of the sensible and well educated of the community in many instances refuse to submit to a faith dictated by any human authority, reject alike all titles which betoken an adherence to any earthly master, and enrol themselves in a community whose extended communion can alone be expressed by a Scriptural term, and is alone properly designated by the primitive title of The Christian Church.

We need not be surprised to find that view of Evangelical truth which is alike distinguished for its simplicity, reasonableness, and coincidence with Scripture, making rapid and extensive progress, in a country where the principles of religious liberty are so well understood; where conscience is neither bribed by temporal interest, nor terrified into submission by spiritual tyranny. To the friends of Unitarianism in Ireland we would say—Be not dispirited; calumny and misrepresentation may darken over you for a moment, but the cloud will quickly pass away. The flame that is but flickering here “abroad

is spreading like the light of heaven." Turn to America, and be encouraged. Sow the seed with diligence now, and rest assured that you are planting the embryo of a tree, whose branches will ere long overshadow the land of your fathers.

We know of no means so well calculated to remove the film which prejudice has spread over the mental vision of too many of our fellow-christians, as the dissemination of such works as those whose names we have prefixed to this article. Dr. Channing stands preeminent among the list of American authors, whose religious writings have been wafted over the Atlantic to delight and instruct the parent country. His style of writing is unique; it is distinguished from the composition of any other religious author, by its peculiar majesty of diction and felicitousness of expression; it is excelled by none, in the musical cadence of its periods, and finished structure of every sentence. The thoughts, too, are worthy of the regal garb in which they are arrayed; striking and original in their conception, they evince much intellectual strength and acute and patient investigation. It would be flattery to say that Mr. Ware excels his countryman in his talent for religious composition. We do not, however, mean to flatter, when we express our belief, that his writings will perhaps prove more generally interesting, and more extensively useful than the publications of Dr. Channing. Mr. Ware's composition is remarkable for its ease, and perfect freedom from all restraint. It attracts by its simplicity; and, if we are not mistaken, is surely characteristic of a mind of true piety, and singular modesty.

The "Life, or rather Recollections of Jotham Anderson," details the personal experience of a Unitarian Minister, in a retired country congregation. The circumstances that led to a gradual change of opinions formerly Calvinistic, to those of a milder and more Scriptural character, are most interestingly narrated. The book is on the whole admirably calculated to remove a prejudice too often unfairly entertained against the doctrines of Unitarianism, as being calculated to deaden or destroy those warm and enthusiastic feelings which the Christian ought to feel on the great subject of religion. So far from finding that his sentiments of love and obedience to his Heavenly Father were weakened by his

embracing the *heretical* doctrine of God's mercy and pliability, Mr. Anderson discovered, that they are thereby increased and cherished. So far from finding that his anxiety respecting the safety of his soul was altogether removed by his believing that he must "work out his salvation with fear and trembling," he is convinced, from his own, and others' experience, that this *heterodox* opinion awakens the most intense solicitude respecting eternal life. The other doctrines of his youth yielded in like manner before the overwhelming evidence of reason and Scripture; and he became a consistent and zealous Christian, a firm and decided Unitarian, from deep and heartfelt conviction. We have not space for quotations, but we warmly recommend Jotham Anderson to our readers, and to all who are willing to weigh the tendency of Unitarianism in the balance of justice; and we are satisfied, that whatever opinion may ultimately be adopted, no individual can rise from the perusal of the work, without catching something of the liberal and Christian spirit that breathes in every page.

In his discourses on the Offices and Character of Jesus Christ, the author enters at large into the consideration of the doctrine of the Atonement. Although Mr. Ware is opposed to this doctrine as commonly received by those Christians who assume the name of Orthodox; yet we are satisfied that any unprejudiced individual, who will read the eleven sermons contained in this volume, must be forced to acknowledge, that the assertion which we hear so often repeated, that the Unitarian *denies* his Saviour, is a base and unfounded calumny. Such slander may serve the purpose of a party leader, who adheres to truth only so far as such an adherence may happen to coincide with his own selfish and ambitious views; but it surely will not be credited by any who are not the mere tools and creatures of a faction. The Unitarian* does not deny his Lord and Master. He embraces his religion as the only foundation of his hopes; but he is subject to calumny and reproach, because his devotion to his Lord will not permit him to acknowledge

* I use the term Unitarian, not to denote the peculiar sentiments of either Arians or Humanitarians exclusively, but the opinions of all who zealously maintain the subordination of the Son to the Father, and the Scriptural and important truth that "God is one."

other guides of his faith, nor suffer him to place in the hands of frail and fallible men, a dominion which he finds the Bible ascribing to the Almighty alone. He beholds with regret the assumption of divine authority by men of like passions with himself; and sorrows to find the example of the Apostle so little acted upon, who, deriving his commission even from the Lord Jesus himself, yet in the spirit of charity declares, "That he sought not to have dominion over the faith of his fellow men, but rather to be helpers of their joy."

The following passage in the tenth sermon (On honouring the Son even as we honour the Father) is so strong an illustration of these remarks, that we cannot forbear quoting it. Speaking of the entire submission of life and conscience which we owe to our Redeemer, he observes—

"How prone are we to substitute some easier show of allegiance, in place of this thorough submission of life and conscience. How ready are we to be loud in professions and exclamations, while in fact we have another master, and follow another guide. The disgrace of the Church in all ages has been its infatuated adherence to human authority, and its willing obedience to human heads. The crown has been torn from him, whose right it is to reign, and placed, not unfrequently with bloody hands, on the brows of arrogant and ambitious persecutors, who ostentatiously became the infallible interpreters of a book which they had virtually sealed, and the capricious masters of the consciences of the Christian world. And thus, while the banners of the Cross were made to float proudly amid their armies, and pomp, and parade, and splendid ceremony called the wondering multitude to gaze at the honours which were lavished on the Saviour of the world; in the meantime his authority was trodden under foot, and the hearts of men were far from him."

"The Church is not yet entirely purified from these sad corruptions. The disciples do not yet sufficiently understand what constitutes the true honour of their master, and of his gospel. Too many think it sufficient to cry, 'Lord, Lord,' without 'doing the things which he says.' Too many are still bowing down to creeds and confessions, idols which their own hands have made, and which draw away their reverence from the true word of life. Too many are still taking from human lips the interpretation of God's will, while its sacred records remain by them unsearched, and the voice of him who 'spake as man never spake,' is not allowed to reach the understanding or the heart, till it has been mingled with the interpretation of some later master. Alas! how has the Son of God been robbed of his honours—how have they been transferred to men! Brethren, do not suffer yourselves to be deceived. If you call any one your master, you withdraw your allegiance from him who should be your only master; you exalt a frail man to the seat of Judgment

where God has placed his Christ ; you surrender your faith and salvation to the wisdom of a fallible being, who ought to be sitting with you at the feet of your common Lord, and you are thus exposed to the hazard of his weakness, errors, and sins. Take, therefore, his word for your only guide. All that you may say, or believe, or profess, respecting his dignity, exaltation, and authority, are but empty words, but unmeaning professions, if your consciences are subject to any other dominion, or your life to any other law."

We regret that our limits will not permit us to give more ample extracts from other parts of these discourses, which are well worthy attentive perusal. They are written with much eloquence, and in a spirit of charity and mildness highly creditable to their author. Jotham Anderson has already undergone a reprint in England. We hope the other volumes will be in the same manner rendered accessible to the Christian public.

G. F.

ON CONSISTENCY IN THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

"What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

THESE words, by which our Saviour has bound the matrimonial union, may with equal propriety be applied to the doctrines which compose the Christian faith : and this caution may be just as necessary in the one case as in the other. There is a propensity in mankind to take up one point of doctrine, and to permit that point so to fill and occupy the mind, as to exclude, not merely the belief, but even the consideration, of other points closely connected therewith, though of equal truth and importance. Divine revelation, we may rest assured, never contradicts itself ; and wherever it may seem to do so, that seeming contradiction is created by the thoughtless and unhappy propensity which I have mentioned. Look at the extensive mischief which has been done to the Christian religion, by the practice—too common among its professing friends—of " putting asunder " what the word of " God hath joined ; " and of representing one part of its doctrine in such a manner, as effectually to discredit and destroy another. The half-instructed and unwary, putting forth garbled statements of particular doctrines, and pressing them by arguments quite inconsistent with other doctrines of equal necessity, have sorely maimed and

mutilated the Gospel of Christ, and furnished the sceptical and unbelieving with plausible grounds for rejecting it altogether.

Give me leave to particularize a few instances, wherein, as it appears to me, the popular Calvinistic creed has thus disjointed, and most seriously injured the Christian religion.

Calvinists imagine that they highly magnify the attribute of *Divine justice*, when they represent God as placed by that attribute under an absolute necessity—either of inflicting an infinite punishment on sin—or demanding an infinite satisfaction. But they do not see nor consider, that by this partial representation of the case, they entirely exclude the consideration of the *Divine goodness and mercy*, and leave no room for the exercise of either. And yet, what is more fully taught in Scripture, than that “the Lord is good, and ready to forgive, and rich in mercy, to all who call upon him in truth”? And the propitiation for sin held forth in the Gospel, is never represented there as giving us any claim of right to the pardon of sin—but as the free and gracious provision of the Divine mercy and love for the recovery of the lost world.

Calvinists imagine that they consult the glory of God, and magnify his sovereign authority, by resolving every thing into the Divine decree. But they do not seem to be aware, that by their views of predestination, they at once destroy the freedom and accountableness of man, and cause a pure and holy God to be regarded as the author of sin! The sovereignty of God is undoubtedly the doctrine of Scripture; but certainly so is the accountableness of man. And though we may not be able to see clearly how the one is compatible with the other; yet, as they are both strongly founded in reason and Scripture, we should take care not to hold either of them in any such sense as must inevitably destroy the other. The Calvinist’s doctrine of Predestination, which leaves nothing whatever to depend on the will of man, deprives him of his moral nature altogether; and renders him as utterly incapable of any thing like virtue or vice, praise or blame, reward or punishment, as the beasts that perish.

Calvinists conceive that they highly extol the compassion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and greatly

magnify the merciful work which he has accomplished, when they describe in the most awful terms the inexorable justice and severity of an incensed God; and when they represent the Almighty Father of all as having no thought of pity or compassion towards fallen and perishing men, until moved thereto, as it were against his original intention, by the interposition of Christ. But if they looked on both sides of the case, they must see, that it is just as necessary to preserve inviolate the essential goodness and mercy of the eternal Father, as it is to be worthily sensible of the benevolence and compassion of his beloved Son. It is therefore most injurious to religion, and any one who looks into Scripture will see that it is likewise most inconsistent therewith, to make such unfavourable representations of the great Father of mercies: for the whole tenor of revelation may convince us, that the coming of Christ as a Saviour was not the cause of the goodness and love of God towards us; but that the essential goodness of God was the cause of the coming of that Saviour—"God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Calvinists, again, are not content with the Scripture representations of the high dignity of the person of our Lord Jesus Christ; and may seem to themselves and others most zealously and earnestly to contend for the Divinity of the Son of God, by confounding it, as they do, with the underived, independent, and supreme Deity of the Father Almighty. But if they could be taught to look, without preconception or prejudice, on the teaching of Divine revelation upon this subject; and to lay aside a certain gratuitous assumption, which leads them to interpret every thing that represents Christ in a subordinate capacity as relating merely to his human nature, as they say, and not to his entire person—they must soon come to see, what others see, that their view of the Divinity of Christ is equally inconsistent with reason and Scripture—that it goes directly to destroy, either the first principle of all religion—the unity of God—or else the first principle of the Christian religion, the very being of the Son of God: and such as entertain that view, would appear to have no just or scriptural conception either of the Father, or of the Son.

In truth, the error of Calvinism just consists in the extravagant indulgence of that mischievous propensity described at the outset, which leads men to take up a given doctrine in such a point of view, as to shut out from the mind all attention to other points, of equal truth and importance. Persons of that creed seize upon a few insulated and ill-understood passages of Scripture; upon these they build their hypothesis; and every other portion of Divine revelation is either forced into the support of this hypothesis, or dismissed the service altogether. They charge others with a shortness—a defectiveness of creed: whereas, it is obvious that there is no other sect in Christendom whose creed stands upon so slender a portion of Holy Scripture as their own: nor is there any other denomination of professing Christians, who appear to believe so little of the Bible. I am far from thinking that the great majority of those who in our day would be thought Calvinists, entertain the doctrinal views which are peculiar to Calvinism; and even of those who do honestly entertain them, I believe there are few or none who allow them any influence over their general deportment; so that, in point of fact, there is scarcely such a being in existence as a practical Calvinist. And so much the better:—for it is very desirable that a system of religion so defective and erroneous as Calvinism, should exist only in the creed, and scarcely, if at all, extend to the conduct of men; and it is delightful to think, that in every thing relating to the Christian spirit and conduct, whether it have immediate respect to the reverence we owe to God, or the benevolence we owe to man, there is little or no difference among those who are Christians at all. Amidst profest differences, this malagreement is truly consoling to the heart of

J. M.

A REVIEW OF SOME MODERN SYNODS.

WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE LI7.)

THE Assembly was opened on Saturday, July 1, 1643, with a Sermon, preached by their Prolocutor, Dr. Twisse, in King Henry VII.'s Chapel, both Houses of Parliament being present. The ordinance for their convention was then read; the roll was called, and the names of absentees marked. Sixty-nine members appeared on the first day. The number summoned was one hundred and one. Among these were some eminent men, who never took their seats, particularly Primate Usher, and Dr. Hammond. Every member was required to make the following vow: "I, A. B., do seriously promise and vow, in the presence of Almighty God, that, in this Assembly, whereof I am a member, I will maintain nothing, in point of doctrine, but what I believe to be most agreeable to the Word of God; nor, in point of discipline, but what may make most for God's Glory and the Peace and Good of his Church." July 19, they petitioned both Houses to appoint a general fast, within the bills of mortality, to forward a thorough reform in doctrine, discipline, and manners; to destroy all monuments of idolatry and superstition; and to cause justice to be executed on all delinquents.

The Ministers appeared in black coats and bands, in imitation of foreign Protestants. They met every week-day, except Saturday, which was allowed to the Divines to prepare for preaching on Sunday. Their session was generally from nine till two or three, which the Prolocutor began and ended with prayers. About sixty of the English divines were usually present. These were divided into three open committees, beside a smaller one for examining candidates for the ministry. Each had a portion of the work prescribed; and in their afternoon meetings, prepared matters for the Assembly, writing their sentiments in distinct propositions, supported by texts. After prayer, the Scribe read the proposition and texts, on which the Assembly debated. "I do marvel," says Mr. Baillie, one of the Scotch Com-

missioners, "at the very accurate and extemporary replies, that many of them usually make. They harangue long and very learnedly. They study the question well beforehand, and prepare their speeches ; but withal, the men are exceeding prompt and well spoken."

This, with the high character of several of the members for professional learning, is a sufficient reply to a trifling and splenetic story, told by Whitelocke. "Mr. Selden spake admirably, and confuted divers of them in their own learning ; and sometimes, when they had cited a text, he would tell them: 'Perhaps in your little pocket bibles with gilt leaves' (which they would often pull out and read) 'the translation may be thus, but the Greek and the Hebrew signifies thus and thus,' and it would totally silence them."

None were called upon to speak ; but all rose of their own accord, and spoke as long as they pleased without interruption ; though there were sometimes great contentions and warm debates. All speeches were addressed to the Prolocutor, but four out of five did not speak at all. When they had spoken and replied, the most part called for the question. Upon this, the Scribe rose from the table, and went to the Prolocutor's chair, who read the proposition from the Scribe's book, and said : "So many as are of opinion, that the question is well stated in the proposition, let them say, Aye ;" and then desired those who thought otherwise to say, No. If they were nearly equal, the Prolocutor called upon them separately to stand up, and they were numbered by the Scribes and others. They then proceeded to discuss the Scriptural proofs of the proposition. When the weather became cold, the Assembly went to the Jerusalem Chamber. At the upper end of it there was a chair set for the Prolocutor, on a frame about one foot above the floor. Before it, on the ground, stood two chairs, for the assessors ; before these, a table, for the two Scribes. The Scotch Commissioners sat on the Prolocutor's right hand. He welcomed them into the Assembly with a long speech. Behind these were seats for the Parliamentary assessors. Other members of Parliament commonly sat near the fire.

In their debates, there was often much heat. This was partly owing to their divesting their Prolocutor or

Moderator of all power, and converting him into a *mere chair*; and to his own inability to preserve order. Mr. Henderson took an opportunity to bring the members to a free and friendly conference on the subject, in which, having seen their fault, they resolved to guard against such excesses in time to come. It is a pity, that other Assemblies of the same nature, have not profited by this precedent. When Philip Nye, a leader of the Independents, was speaking against Presbytery, he was cried down as impertinent. The day following, when he saw the Assembly full of prime nobles and chief members of both houses, [it would appear from this, that they were used to attend as hearers] he entered upon that argument again, and very boldly offered to demonstrate, that the plan of bringing the whole kingdom under one national assembly was formidable, yea, thrice pernicious to civil states and kingdoms. All cried him down, and some would have had him expelled the Assembly as seditious. They voted him to have spoken against the order, which was the highest of their censures. The Presbyterians agreed not to meet with him except he acknowledged his fault; the Independents were resolved not to meet without him; and he was resolute to recall nothing of the substance of what he had said. At last, the Presbyterian members were prevailed upon to shuffle it over, as well as they could, and to go on with their business. "Ever since, (say they) we find him the most accommodating man in the company." Mr. Nye differed from them in another point. He thought, that in preaching, the minister should be covered, and the people uncovered; but in the sacrament, the minister should be uncovered, as a servant; and the guests, all covered; and contended, that in communicating, some should be at the table, and some about it, without any succession of companies.

The speakers observed the Parliamentary practice, of referring to each other, without mentioning names.

Their first business was to revise the 39 Articles. They were ten weeks employed in debating the first 15, before the arrival of the Scotch Commissioners. The design was to render their sense more express and determinate in favour of Calvinism. The plan was given up, and the confession undertaken, probably in compliment to the

Scots, who joined them in November. Their next occupation was to censure the Anti-nomians, a delicate task for high Calvinists. Then followed the solemn league and covenant, which went greatly against the grain with the English. Gataker and others refused to sign for the extirpation of prelacy in general, being in favour of primitive episcopacy; and would abjure only the English hierarchy. The English Commissioners would have had only a civil league; but the Scots insisted on a religious one. Sir Henry Vane artfully inserted the word *league* into the title, as being more easily broken than a covenant; and to evade the imposition of Presbytery, he obtained the insertion of "according to the word of God," in the first article; but the Scots relied on "according to the practice of the best reformed churches." There were several other attempts to outwit each other. These questions brought on an inquiry into the constitution of the primitive church, which being founded on the model of the Jewish synagogue, gave the Lightfoots, Seldens, Colemans, and other masters of Jewish antiquities an opportunity of displaying their superior learning, and disconcerting the warmer Presbyterians. The question of ordination then came before them of course, and particularly the right of presbyters to ordain without a bishop. It was finally agreed that associations of ministers in the city and great towns might ordain, *Jure Fraternitatis*. They accordingly prepared a form of ordination, which was converted into an ordinance by Parliament. This involved several points, which occasioned long debates; the imposition of hands, with its purpose and efficacy;—the right of single congregations to ordain their own officers;—the necessity of election to a particular charge, &c.

The next question related to the form of church government. Here the Independents and Erastians united against the Presbyterians; and debated the point for 30 days. The Erastians were so called from Erastus, a German physician. His family name was Lieber, signifying beloved, which he changed into Erastus, a Greek word of similar meaning; as Erasmus, Melancthon, and many others did. Erasmus assumed a Latin and a Greek appellation of similar import with his paternal name

Gerard, *beloved*; calling himself Desiderius Erasmus.* —The pastoral office, according to Erastus, was only persuasive. The Lord's Supper and other ordinances were to be free and open to all. The minister might dissuade the vicious and unqualified from the communion, but might not refuse it, nor inflict any kind of censure. The principal inquiries were about the constitution and form of the Church of Jerusalem, and subordination of Synods, and Lay Elders.

The fiercest contention between the Assembly and the Parliament was concerning the power of the Keys, which the former had voted to be in the Eldership or Presbytery in these words: "The Keys of the kingdom of Heaven were committed to the officers of the church, by virtue whereof they have power respectively to retain and remit sins; to shut the kingdom of heaven against the impenitent, both by the word and censures; and to open it to the penitent by absolution; and to prevent the profanation of the Holy Sacrament by notorious and obstinate offenders. The said officers are to proceed by admonition, suspension from the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper for a season, and by excommunication from the church, according to the nature of the crime and demerit of the person:" all which powers they claimed not by the law of the land, but *jure divino*, or by divine appointment. The Independents claimed this power for the brotherhood of each congregation; but without any civil sanctions or punishments annexed. The Erastians were for leaving the communion open: and referring all crimes to the civil magistrate.—When the question came into debate in the House of Commons, Selden delivered his opinion against all suspension and excommunication.

Whitelocke has given us the substance of Selden's speech, and the words of his own, (*Memorials*, 169) "Selden declared his opinion: that for 4000 years there was no law to suspend persons from religious exercises:—that under the law, every sinner was to come to offer, *eo nomine*, as he was a sinner:—that strangers were

* The character of Erasmus corresponded with the names he assumed. In the midst of a contentious age, he was distinguished by moderation and good humour; and amused himself with exposing the folly, hypocrisy and bigotry of the dominant party.

kept away from the passover; but they were Pagans; and the question now is, not for keeping away Pagans, but Protestants from Protestant worship. No divine can show a command to suspend from the sacrament. No man is kept from the sacrament, by the reformed churches, because he is guilty of any sin, or hath not made satisfaction. Every man is a sinner: the difference is only, that one is a sinner in private, and another in public. No man can show any excommunication, till the Popes Victor and Zephorus (200 years after Christ) first began to use it upon private quarrels. It is a human invention, taken from the heathens." *Procul, procul este profani.*

Whitelocke argued thus: A Pastor is to feed the flock with spiritual food. How improper then is it for him to keep them from food; to drive them from the Bread of Life. The more sinful and ignorant people are, the more do they need instruction. The ordinance was passed, but with such provisoes as showed, that the Parliament were determined not to part with the spiritual sword, and subject their civil property to the power of the church, which gave great offence to the Scotch Commissioners, and to most of the English Presbyterians. The Parliament, observing their ambition to make the Church independent of the state, girt the laws closer about them, and subjected their determinations more immediately to the civil magistrate by another ordinance. (See Whitelocke p.p. 113, &c.)

In the course of these debates—Lightfoot, who was an Episcopalian, employed his Hebrew learning, and skill in Jewish antiquities, to embarrass the Presbyterians, particularly as to Lay Elders, Deaconesses, Imposition of Hands, Set Forms, and Christmas-day. He also opposed that article, that *works done before justification are displeasing to God*; and the following addition, which they made to the second of the thirty-nine Articles: "that for our sakes Jesus suffered most grievous torments in his soul immediately from God." Among the rules laid down for preachers, one was, "that a doctrine raised out of a text, ought to be such a truth, as is principally intended in that place." Lightfoot alleged three examples to the contrary in one chapter, Matt. ii. "Out of Egypt have I called my Son"—"In Rama was a voice heard"—and, "He shall be called a

Nazarine," which the Evangelist quotes in a sense different from the principal intent of the prophet. Whereupon they altered it thus, "Such a truth as is principally intended, or *what is most for edification.*"

Your overly religious people think they can never exceed in professing their sins, especially on occasions of humiliation, though I presume they do not wish to be understood too strictly; and would be sorry to see their effusions recorded, as tests of character. There is extant, in the Wodrow Manuscript, a statement, by the Assembly, of their own sins, with a view to a solemn Fast, entitled, *The Sins of the Assembly in nine points*: 1. Neglecting attendance in the Assembly, though the affairs be so important. 2. Absence from the prayers. 3. Reading and talking in time of debates. 4. Neglect of committees. 5. Some speak too much; some too little. 6. Indecent behaviour. 7. Unseemly language and heats upon it. 8. Neglect of trying Ministers. 9. Members of the Assembly drawing on parties, or being frightened with needless jealousies. If the Reverend Fathers had kept their own counsel, with the advantage of closed doors, for none could be present without an order from both Houses, they might have stood pre-eminent among Ecclesiastical Bodies; but this candid, perhaps overstrained confession, brings them to a level with similar assemblies. I am content with what they say of themselves without staining my paper with the virulent invectives of Clarendon, Laud, and *English Presbyterian Eloquence*; or adopting the partial representations of their friends.

I have more pleasure in recording the dispassionate character given by Neal: "If the reader will carefully peruse the list, he will find in it some of the most considerable Lawyers and ablest Divines of the age; and though they might have mistaken notions of church discipline, and were no better acquainted with the rights of conscience and private judgment than their predecessors, the Bishops, yet, with all their faults, impartial posterity will admit, the far greater number were men of exemplary piety and devotion, who had a real zeal for the glory of God, and the purity of the Christian faith and practice."—"Though their sentiments in divinity were, in many instances, too narrow and contracted, yet, with all their faults, among which their perse-

cuting spirit for religion was not the least, they were certainly men of real piety and virtue, who meant well, and had the interest of religion at heart. Most of them had as much learning as any in the times in which they lived. The names of Lightfoot, Selden, Gataker, Greenhill, Arrowsmith, Twysse, Bishop Reynolds, Wallis, &c. will be always famous in the learned world; and had they not grasped at coercive power or jurisdiction, over the consciences of men, their memoirs would have been unspotted. Mr. Baxter, who knew most of them, says: "They were men of eminent learning, godliness, ministerial ability, and fidelity; and being not worthy to be one of them myself, I may more fully speak the truth, which I know, even in the face of malice and envy, that, as far as I am able to judge, by the information of history, and by any other evidences, the Christian world, since the days of the Apostles, had never a Synod of more excellent Divines than this and the Synod of Dort."

"In 1648, the Assembly, having finished their main business, were reduced to a small number. Most of the country members went home; and those who remained about London, were employed chiefly in the examination of such Ministers as presented themselves for ordination or induction into Livings. Thus they continued till February 22, 1648-9, about three weeks after the King's death, having sat five years, six months, and twenty days; in which time they had 1163 sessions. They were afterwards turned into a Committee for the purposes last mentioned, and met every Thursday morning, till March 25, 1652, when, the Long Parliament being turned out of the House by Oliver Cromwell, they broke up, without any formal dissolution.—The Provincial Assemblies of London met regularly every half-year, till the year 1655, when, finding themselves without power, they desisted. There were none legally formed in any other counties. However, the country ministers entered into Voluntary Associations, and erected a sort of classes for ordination of Ministers, and promoting friendship and peace among themselves, many of the Independent Ministers joining with them. The Associations met once a month, at one or other church in the county; and, after prayers and a sermon, conferred upon the state of religion, and gave their advice upon

such cases as were brought before them, in a neighbourly and friendly manner." They had the rare merit of profiting by adversity.

"The Works of the Assembly, beside some Letters to Foreign Churches, and occasional Admonitions, were: 1. Their Humble Advice to the Parliament for Ordination of Ministers, and settling the Presbyterian Government; 2. A Directory for Public Worship; 3. A Confession of Faith; 4. A Larger and Shorter Catechism; 5. A Review of some of the 39 Articles. The Annotations on the Bible, which go under their name, were neither undertaken nor revised by them, but by a Committee of Parliament, who named the Commentators, and furnished them with Books; nor were they all Members of the Assembly."—*Neal*, III. 386, 391.

ERASMUS.

* THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN'S CRITICISM
ON MATT. xii. 8.

"Such is our argument in support of our faith in the Deity, or perfect equality of the Lord Jesus Christ, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, which we submit to the unbiassed and conscientious judgment of your readers. It is an argument based on the Saviour's own word and work—an argument from which we repeat there is no escape. For so long as the expression remains on record, the expression which fell from the lips of the Son of God himself—that "the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath," we must either admit with every Orthodox Presbyterian, that he is the Great and Mighty God, or else if, with the Arian we deny His Deity, we must regard Him, not as a Teacher come from God, but with fear and reverence we write it—a Teacher of Falsehood and Blasphemy.
"H."

This is one of the mighty proofs that a correspondent H. in the O. P. puts forth in every 4th Number, to convince the world of the Deity, or perfect equality of the Lord Jesus Christ with the Father and the Holy Spirit. After taking four months to think of it, he brings it forth in all its omnipotent energy for the conversion of Arian heretics. But long as has been the

* We were sorry that we had not room for this article in our last number; but the length of our *Intelligence* prevented the insertion of it and other favours.—ED.

time that he has taken for concocting this argument, we must advise him to be a little more cautious still. We must tell him in the name of our common christianity to beware. He and his party are indirectly doing much to encourage infidelity in many minds : but here he is directly aiding and abetting attempts to weaken our cause. He is resting his proof of what he considers the fundamental article of christian faith, upon one of the most dubious passages in the sacred volume. The jet of his argument is that in Exodus xx. the seventh day is called the "Sabbath of the Lord thy God;" and in Matt. xii. 8. Mark ii. 28., and Luke vi. 9. the Son of Man is said to be "Lord even of the Sabbath day." Therefore the Son of Man is the Lord our God. He of course understands the "Son of Man" here to mean Jesus Christ. But suppose him to be wrong in this, as I shall presently shew that he is, and that the Son of Man simply means man—what an awful assertion has he made that every human being "is the Great and Mighty God ; or else we must regard Jesus Christ not as a Teacher come from God, but with fear and reverence we write it—a Teacher of Falsehood and Blasphemy." I repeat it, that the writer H. is brought into the awful predicament here stated. If "the Son of Man" in these passages mean not Jesus Christ, but any man ; then it follows that any man is the Mighty God, or the Blessed Jesus is a Teacher of Blasphemy and Falsehood. Let us now consider the words as given in Mark ii. 27, 28. And he said unto them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. *Therefore* the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath." Jesus was justifying his disciples for plucking some ears of corn as they passed through the corn fields on the Sabbath-day and eating them. Now what is the argument contained in these two verses ? It is this—that as the Sabbath was instituted for man's good—for his benefit—not man merely to observe the Sabbath—it was in his power, and he had authority to break through the rest required to be observed on that day, for the purpose of preserving his life, or of satisfying his hunger by plucking and eating ears of corn as in this case. The word "therefore" clearly shews this interpretation to be right. Why was man Lord of the Sabbath ? Because the Sabbath was made for him, and not he for it.

I might stop here ; but as the plainest common sense does not go down with some, if it come from an Arian, I will subjoin the explanation of MATT. xii. 8. as given by the ever-memorable John Hales, a Trinitarian, and called ever-memorable from the uncommon estimation in which he was held by all the learned of his own day :—

“ They that by ‘ the Son of Man,’ here understand Christ, or the Messias, do mistake ; for in that acceptation of the words, the reason doth not hold : for if Christ had meant only, that he as the Messias, was Lord of the Sabbath, and so could abrogate it at his pleasure, then what needed all the three other arguments that went before ? By the *Son of Man* therefore is to be understood, *every common ordinary man* ; as appears most evidently by that of St. Mark ii. 27. ‘ The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath !’ Besides, at this time, Christ neither had preached, nor would have others to preach, that he was the Messias : and a good while after this, as you may see in Matt. xvi. 20. ‘ Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.’ The sense of the words therefore is this—‘ That which is ordained for another thing, ought to give place to that thing for which it is ordained :’ but the Sabbath was ordained for man, every man ; therefore it ought to give place unto him : namely, when a thing so nearly concerning man as his Salvation steppeth in between. For to be ‘ Lord of the Sabbath’ is to dispose and order the Sabbath unto his own use, and to have a right so to order and dispose it.”

The celebrated Matthew Pool, I presume, is an orthodox authority above all suspicion—let us hear what he says in his *Synopsis Criticorum*. After giving us one interpretation, that which H. has so confidently advanced, he goes on—

“ Or 2dly. Any man, as appears very plainly from Mark ii. 27, 28. where the words do not form coherent sense if you interpret ‘ the Son of Man’ to mean the Messias, sent with power to annul the Law. Besides, Jesus at that time did not preach or wish himself to be preached as Christ to the people or the Pharisees. The meaning of Christ’s words, which are somewhat more fully expressed by Mark, is, what is provided for the sake of another thing, ought to give way to the thing for sake of which it was provided. But the Sabbath was ordained for the sake of man, it ought therefore to give way to man, particularly when his safety is concerned.”

But it is not necessary to establish the one interpretation rather than the other, to see how injudicious H. is in resting upon so weak a proof. It is sufficient for my purpose to show that divines of high repute on his own side, are by his argument guilty of regarding Jesus Christ “ not as a Teacher come from God,” but a Teacher of Falsehood and Blasphemy.

Scripture seems to be to "The Orthodox Presbyterian," what edge tools are to children, rather dangerous to meddle with. It is safer for the Editors or conductors, to follow that line that is so congenial to their own temper, and so well adapted to the prejudiced and ignorant portion of the community whose good graces they are anxious to court; it is safer for them to deal as hitherto, in foul calumnies against their fellow christians, in known and deliberate untruths, regardless of the threat that the "Lord will destroy them that speak leasing." They seem aware of this indeed themselves, for the preceding article is full of this filth: and to it is appended a note from the Editor, which we heard most justly denounced from the pulpit, as containing a known and wilful falsehood on the part of the Editor or Editors, and which we will here record in our pages as an example of defamation, most atrocious and unprincipled:—

"Let the Presbyterians of Ulster then beware. Unitarianism sets up a man's opinion in *opposition to the Lord Jesus*, pronounces him *in error*,—calls the miraculous conception a *fable*,—declares Evangelists to be *fools or rogues*,—and pronounces Paul a *dupe*, an *impostor* and *corrupter* of the truth! And, after all this, we hear of the 'Unitarian Association in Dublin,' and the 'Unitarian Churches of the North.' May God protect his people from such deadly enemies of the truth."

V. D. M.

P.S.—H.'s pen has become more prolific, and produces monthly now, instead of quarterly. This last effort is to prove, that because God is Judge of all the Earth—and because "he will judge the world in righteousness *by that man whom he hath ordained*," Acts. xvii. 31. therefore Jesus Christ who is "ordained of God to be judge of quick and dead" is the Lord God Almighty himself. This is so satisfactory to H. that he calls it an "overwhelming argument" in proof of the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ: *over-whelming* it most certainly is; for it makes at once *twelve gods* in the twelve apostles, who are to "sit on thrones *judging* the twelve tribes of Israel." Matt. xix. 20. It makes a God of Moses also, who "sat to *judge* the people," and David, in Ps. lxxii, is thus made to pray that Solomon may be made a God—for he prays God to *give him his judgments*, that he may *judge* God's people with righteousness. Verily this is an *over-whelming* argument—more especially as *giving* judgment—or *committing* judgment is according to him

—no proof of delegated power or of inferiority of nature :
 —but, “on the contrary is a decisive proof against such suppositions,” and “is intended for the very purpose of establishing the Son’s perfect equality with the Father.” This renders the argument more overwhelming still ; for it makes David, in the psalm that I have mentioned, pray, that Solomon shall become equal to the Father, because he prays that judgment may be given him : and it stops the mouth of all objectors at once ; for if such terms as giving judgment, committing judgment, &c. cannot prove *delegation* of powers—it is impossible to find words that can.

Intelligence.

THE PROGRESS OF FANATICISM.

OUR limits will not permit us to say all we are *disposed* to say, or all we *could* say, on this subject. The disease appears to be contagious ; and men, women, and children are suffering under its influence : it spares neither age, sex, nor situation. Young men dream dreams, and old men see visions ;—Youthful maidens prophesy, and aged “damsels” utter marvellous things. Clergy and laity of certain castes, are getting above the world, and spurn from them all sublunary matters ;—Luna, indeed, seems to be the goddess of their worship, and she propitiously rewards them with an ample portion of lunacy. The disciples of Joanna Southcote still continue to “garnish their houses,” and to preserve and prepare cradles and cradle-clothes for the expected Messiah. The Rev. Mr. Irving is girding on his armour, and preparing to meet Gog and Magog in mortal combat, at the decisive battle of Armageddon. The gift of *tongues* is naturally distributed among several persons residing in the vicinity of the learned University of Glasgow ; and the power of working miracles, and of saying to the sickly and infirm, with *effect*, “arise take up thy bed and walk,” is properly bestowed on some in the neighbourhood of the same sanctified city. Many of these particulars were communicated to us a considerable time ago, by a “Native Swiss ;” but as we have been taught to look on such authority with a jealous, perhaps with a jaundiced eye, we were cautious, as is our custom, and

did not like to risk our fair fame, and well earned reputation, by promulgating to the world all that we had heard. The last number, however, of "The Christian Pioneer" has banished all uncertainty on the subject, and in a most interesting article signed "Argus," has set the "Progress of Fanaticism" before us in the clearest point of view. It is impossible for us to give more than a mere faint outline of the article. It commences with some beautiful observations on the goodness of God, as displayed in the works of creation—but states the melancholy fact, that early prejudices and perverted education, too often seal up our eyes against the contemplation of his benevolence. "The mind, even of childhood," says the author, "is poisoned in its openings, and the heart, glowing with the best feelings and affections, is perverted by confessions and catechisms. The Book of Nature is left for Boston's Fourfold State, and the religion of creation is displaced by systematic theology. And then, instead of viewing creation as the mirror of infinite goodness, it learns to regard it as a wilderness and a desolation; and man, the high-priest of its riches, as a vile and loathsome worm—and hell yawns for its predestined victim, and the blackness of darkness shrouds him for ever." We have then a sketch of the history of Isabella Campbell, daughter of a retired officer of the army, and residing on a beautiful spot near the shore of the Gaire-Loch, in Dumbartonshire. Her simplicity and purity are undoubted—her attention to her duties assiduous and sincere, and her whole conduct regulated by the strictest external decorum and propriety. But notwithstanding all this, she regards God as her enemy; suffers, in consequence, the most excruciating torture of soul; gives herself up to melancholy and madness; till at length, after having undergone the deepest and most agonizing torments of a wounded spirit, she passes into a state of the most rapturous emotion; able to find vent for her extatic feelings, only in the "beautiful imagery of the Song of Solomon," and expires in the 20th year of her age, full of hope and confidence. We have no room for remarks on her character, or on the causes which led to, what we would call, the dreadful malady of her mind; nor can we afford to make any observations on her Rev. biographer, and, we suppose, spiritual guide, Mr. Storey, a clergyman of the established Church

of Scotland; but we must add a few anecdotes of her sister Mary, who is performing just now, with great eclat, in that Orthodox country. We quote from the *Pioneer*—"Mary Campbell has become the Pythoness of the district, and pours forth her rhapsodies as the immediate inspirations of Heaven. Nor are the believers confined to the ignorant and illiterate; clergymen, and members of the law, merchants, and tradespeople, alike are flocking to the standard of the cross, which she and her admirers have reared. She has received the gift of tongues, and the power of working miracles."

* * * * "Several individuals, possessed with these ideas, are preparing to leave this country, and are going to meet Christ either in Palestine or Otaheite! Mary Campbell is allowing her hair to grow that she may be able with it to wipe the feet of Jesus. Persons have sold their property in order to embark on this expedition. The lady of a military officer has subscribed 40% to transport Mary Campbell to the Levant. About 11,000% have been realised. The whole matter is to be brought before the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland this month,"—and there without note or comment do we leave it.

PRESBYTERIAN FUND,

For the protection of the Rights of Conscience.

THE late unhappy dissensions in the Synod of Ulster have ended in the secession of a considerable number of Ministers and Congregations, from that Body. The majority persevered in enforcing new and rigorous enactments, of which the minority complained as a breach of compact and an infringement of their rights, and to which they could not submit without the sacrifice of conscience. Under these circumstances, a separation became necessary; and, had it been conducted in a proper spirit, it would have been hailed by the truly Christian portion of all Denominations, as a most desirable event. Such a peaceful and honourable settlement might reasonably have been expected, from the repeated declarations of the leaders of the majority, "that they wished not to injure their brethren of the minority, in their reputation, their property, or their ministerial comforts: and that their sole desire was, to be left alone to pursue their own plans without hinderance or molestation." How far this Christian pledge has been redeemed, the deplorable scenes exhibited in Presbyterian Ulster, during the last twelve months, will afford the best proof. Upon these unhappy scenes, which are already familiar to the public, it would be equally painful and superfluous to enlarge.

It may be necessary, however, to state, that, no sooner had the Remonstrants retired from the Synod, at the request of their brethren, and under the provisions of an apparently friendly agreement, than, in very many instances, their former co-presbyters and friends, who had received ordination from their hands, used every exertion in the compass of their power, to deprive them of their meeting-houses and congregations; and, consequently, of their means of earthly support. Secret and public emissaries were sent amongst their people, to create distraction by misrepresenting their doctrines—innumerable Tracts, Pamphlets, and Advices were industriously circulated, with the same view—the private influence, open threats, and public acts of Landlords and Magistrates were engaged in the same cause—political rancour was largely enlisted on the side of sectarian animosity—and men, called Ministers of the Gospel of Peace, not only obtruded themselves into the congregations, but even into the meeting-houses and pulpits of their Fathers and Brethren, in order to effectuate their ruin. In every Remonstrant Congregation, some of these arts have been tried; in others, the whole of them have been brought into operation; and it is evident, that they would all have been resorted to in every case, had there been a reasonable prospect of success. In this way, the respectable Ministers of Glenarm, Cairncastle, Ballycarry, Templepatrick, Greyabbey, and Warrenpoint, have been grievously harassed in mind, seriously injured in their worldly circumstances, and some of them almost broken down in their constitutions; whilst their estimable families have been exposed, not only to severe temporal privations, but also to the most afflictive anxieties, and the most painful apprehensions. Preaching is afforded, every Lord's Day, by Ministers of the Synod of Ulster, to the disaffected individuals in the above-named congregations; and the greatest exertions are made to prevent the restoration of amity and peace. The respectable Magistrate of Greyabbey, who was deceived by false representations, has had the good sense and good feeling to make all the reparation in his power, for the error into which he was seduced: but, unhappily, there are other cases, where a less becoming spirit has been manifested. In one instance, the Landlord has fitted up a temporary place of worship for the male-contents, and promised, it is said, £20 a-year, to aid them with preaching; whilst the aged Minister has received notice to leave the Congregational Farm, which was held by his predecessors, and which has been occupied by himself for *thirty-three years*; or to pay *double the present rent* from November next, *i. e.* nearly *twice the actual value of the land*! Another most amiable and upright Minister, whose meeting-house has been repeatedly broken open by violence, in order to introduce strangers for the purpose of preaching, some time ago received notice from the Lord of the soil, to make an agreement to pay rent for the premises. Believing, and being advised, that his house is held by *prescriptive right*, he refused to comply with the demand, and, consequently, notice of ejectment has been served upon him to surrender a certain portion of the meeting-house green, to which, it is believed, the Landlord can establish his title.

This is but a meagre outline of the difficulties and trials to which the Remonstrant Ministers and Congregations have been exposed ; and a sample of what others may expect, who are bold and honest enough to stand up in defence of christian liberty and the rights of conscience. To support the weak, to encourage integrity, to intimidate the oppressor, and to secure, by all legal means, many other valuable objects connected with religious liberty, a number of Lay Gentlemen have proposed the establishment of a Fund, to be entitled " The Presbyterian Fund, for the protection of the Rights of Conscience," the interest of which, and the interest *only*, shall be appropriated to the following purposes, viz :—

1.—To assist and defend injured or persecuted Ministers and Congregations.

2.—To aid New Congregations in the erection of Places of Worship and the support of their Ministers.

3.—To endow a Professorship of Divinity, in due time, for the Students of the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, the Synod of Munster, the Presbytery of Antrim, and all others who may choose to avail themselves of this source of Instruction.

4.—To promote such other objects connected with the maintenance of the Rights of Conscience, as the Trustees and Managers of the Fund may deem expedient, in conformity with the provisions of a Deed of Trust hereafter to be executed.

The first proposition requires no argument to enforce its importance. If religion be the greatest blessing which a merciful Providence has bestowed upon man, surely every genuine christian will be ready to aid a brother, who is honestly struggling to vindicate his claim to the full and free enjoyment of the common bounty of Heaven.

The second proposition naturally results from the first. If every man possesses an inalienable right to worship God according to the dictates of his own mind, it is the duty of the affluent to assist those, in obtaining the ordinary means of Grace, who may be unable to secure such blessings for themselves. It is upon this rational and christian principle, that the various sects mutually aid each other to erect places of worship, and thereby increase their mutual goodwill. We know that there are, in various parts of the country, many worthy persons, who are dissatisfied with the doctrines or discipline of the General Synod of Ulster, and who are neither sufficiently numerous nor affluent to erect places of worship, and to support Ministers, entirely by their own resources. Should such individuals be left either to worship God under circumstances which engage neither their hearts nor their minds, or be altogether *deprived* of the ordinances of religion? We may confidently appeal for assistance, even to those who *differ* from them in opinion ; and we are certain, that we cannot fail, when we appeal to those who *sympathise* with them in religious sentiments. In various parts of Ulster there are many highly intelligent and respectable families, who only require a trifling aid and countenance, to establish themselves into congregations connected with the Remonstrants—some dissatisfied with the Synod on the ground of doctrine, and others on the

ground of discipline. Are we not bound in honour and in duty, to assist such persons, (and they are not few,) in casting off a yoke which was too galling for our own necks? Let it not be supposed, that we propose to set out upon such wild and unchristian crusades for proselytizing, as we condemn in others; or that we desire to sow the seeds of dissension in the congregations of the Synod which are living in peace. No: although we would gladly proselytize by all fair, open, christian exertions, we shall never be partakers in destroying the charities of life, and trampling upon the moral precepts of the Gospel, in order to advance the cause of speculative theology. We would give no aid, no countenance, to any body of men who should attempt to disturb any Minister of the Synod, in the possession of his meeting-house, or any of his natural and christian rights. But, if a considerable number of individuals should come to us and say—"We cannot benefit by the teaching of our present pastor; we will not remain under the Synod of Ulster in its present form; and we are determined, according to the divine commandment, to 'come out from them in peace,'"—to such persons we would joyfully extend "the right hand of fellowship," and consider that we honoured our Creator by assisting them "to worship him in sincerity and truth." To such persons, and to such *alone*, who act from conscience and not from contention, will the advantages of the Presbyterian Fund be extended.

The establishment of a Professorship of Divinity for the Non-subscribing Dissenters of Ireland, is an object of the highest importance, as connected with the extension of religious truth, and the maintenance of religious liberty. No efforts of any other kind, how great and praiseworthy soever, can be permanently and extensively useful, without the indispensable requisite of an able, pious, enlightened Ministry—men of enlarged minds and generous hearts; zealous in the cause of truth and freedom. Peculiar times require peculiar duties; and special circumstances demand special qualifications. Twenty years ago, during the halcyon days of religious indifference, ignorant and half-educated youths undertook the work of the ministry, without exciting dissatisfaction; but such persons would ill supply the wants and wishes of the liberal Dissenters of Ireland in the present age. The most enlightened portion of the community demand an enlightened Ministry; and those who may have daily to contend with the wildness of enthusiasm, the blindness of prejudice, the influence of fashion, the ascendancy of power, and the seductions of worldly interest, would require to be men of no ordinary qualifications. Such men we cannot obtain without a peculiar course of instruction. We give a suitable education for the bar, for medicine, for business; and we must do the same, if we would exalt the cause of religious liberty to the station which it ought to maintain. The Belfast Institution affords an admirable literary and scientific education; but, with all due respect for Dr. Hanna, who is an excellent Professor for the Synod of Ulster, no man will say that he is qualified to give a theological education suited to the wants and wishes of the liberal Dissenters of Ireland. He is himself in chains, and he must teach his pupils to move in chains, if they would please their masters, or prosper in

the world. Now, we require *freemen*, and they must be *educated free*. We will not have them to enter upon the study of Divinity with the yoke of human bondage upon their necks, *and the fear of knowledge* continually before their eyes. We will have them taught to *inquire*, to *think*, "to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good." But, we can only have them such, by placing them under a Professor of Theology, untrammelled in matters of faith, by the authority of man. This great object cannot be accomplished, in all probability, for some time ; but it will be kept steadily in view, as by far more essential than any, or *all* of the others, to the advancement of pure and undefiled religion, and the permanent respectability of our Church. We trust also, that its importance will be deeply impressed upon all Subscribers to the Fund, as a powerful motive to liberality on their own part, and an inducement to solicit the co-operation of others. Great *ends* cannot be attained by small *means*.

The fourth proposition is intended to embrace peculiar cases as they may arise ; and the subscribers may rest assured, that every possible precaution will be used to secure the permanent appropriation of the interest of the Fund, to the purpose for which it is contributed. The Deed of Trust will be drawn up by eminent Counsel ; and before being engrossed, it will be submitted to the consideration of a general meeting of the Subscribers. As the Fund originated in the spirit and liberality of the laity, they will have the principal share in its management,—it being determined, that *two thirds* of the Trustees shall always be *Laymen*.

Since it is the natural and bounden duty of all men to vindicate their own principles, to maintain their own privileges, and to aid the unfortunate who are suffering for conscience' sake, we are convinced, that the object of *The Presbyterian Fund* will be approved by the liberal and benevolent of all Denominations. We calculate the more confidently on the co-operation of our fellow Christians of various persuasions, because there is nothing *exclusive* in the principles of the Remonstrants, the Presbytery of Antrim, or the Synod of Munster, on the ground of controverted doctrines. Their great bond of union is, the Right of Private Judgment, the sufficiency of Scripture, and the paramount importance of Charity, as the essence of Christianity. On these grounds, they fairly anticipate a general and liberal support ; and we think they have acted prudently in calling for one generous, simultaneous exertion, in furtherance of a number of important objects, all tending to accomplish one common end. To this we may add, that the plan of preserving inviolate the *Principal* of the Fund, and merely appropriating the *Interest* to the contemplated objects, must secure general approbation. By this judicious arrangement, every Subscriber will have the satisfaction of knowing, that his Contribution will become *permanently* useful, and that it can never be squandered or misapplied at the caprice of individuals, or under the influence of temporary excitement. Funds instituted upon similar principles have been found extremely valuable, both in England and Ireland ; and we are persuaded that no greater benefit could be conferred upon Society, than adopting means for the steady maintenance of religious liberty.

So far as applications have been made, the call has been, in almost every instance, *nobly answered*. In the Town and Vicinity of Belfast alone, a large sum has been already subscribed, during the last fortnight. Six Gentlemen have given £100 each; several, £50 each; and a great many, £25, £20, £10 and £5 each.—Hitherto, no smaller sums have been received, nor has any application been made in the Country; but plans will speedily be adopted for extending the Subscription to different parts of Ireland; and the humblest contribution of the sincere friend of religious liberty, who can only afford the “widow’s mite,” will be as cheerfully and gratefully received, as the splendid donation of the affluent.

The Presbytery of Antrim have entered into the measure with an ardent zeal: we are certain of an equal co-operation on the part of the Synod of Munster: and, in due time, a call will be made upon our generous friends in England, which, *we have the best reasons to know*, will not be made in vain.

We consider this the most important measure for the protection of the rights of conscience, and the extension of religious liberty, that has ever been brought before the Christian public in this country. As many may be disposed to contribute to such an object, who may not be personally called upon, the names of respectable individuals, in different places, will hereafter be published, to whom subscriptions may be given. In the meantime, WILLIAM BOYD, Esq. Belfast, the Treasurer of the Fund, will be ready to receive contributions.

The amount already subscribed, is honourable to our age, our country, and our cause.

DINNER AT DERRYBOY.

It is well known to our readers, and to the public at large, that a number of highly respectable individuals in the neighbourhood of Killileagh, and the surrounding district, had invited, a considerable time ago, the Remonstrant Ministers to a Public Dinner. The invitation was accepted; and accordingly, on the 10th of June, a most excellent entertainment was provided at Derryboy, and the company on the occasion amounted to upwards of 200. Dr. Gordon, of Saintfield, was called to the chair; and though the party was so large, yet, so admirable were the arrangements, that not the slightest symptom of confusion was visible. The evening passed away in the greatest harmony: several appropriate and patriotic toasts were given, and many excellent speeches delivered. The kindest feelings and best affections of our nature were drawn forth; and peace, concord, and happiness pervaded the entire meeting. Such a scene, at such a place, and in such times as those we live in, was truly delightful—it was a green spot in the desert—the shade of a mighty

rock in a burning land. The Ministers of the Remonstrant Synod are not objects of pity—they stand on high ground; and when they see themselves surrounded and cheered, in town and country, by the really honest and intelligent and independent Presbyterians of Ulster, they have no cause to complain.

Connected with the proceedings of the day, we subjoin the following short address to the Unitarians of Derryboy and vicinity, from (we have reason to believe) a member of their own Society :—

“CHRISTIAN BRETHREN—A branch of the Irish Unitarian Christian Society has lately been established amongst you. Persevere in support of that Society. It will be productive of incalculable good. Truth requires your utmost exertions. The Remonstrant Ministers and the Presbytery of Antrim, will undoubtedly give their best services to you in behalf of religious truth. Lose no time in securing their services. Be active also in the circulation of Tracts and Books. All this can be done in the spirit of Christian charity. Truth and Charity are quite consistent. Keep in view the erection of a house in which you may conscientiously worship, on that lot of ground which has been consecrated by the meeting of the 10th. You have open enemies. You have also secret enemies; namely, those who, holding Unitarian sentiments, would yet, out of, not merely lukewarmness, but *interested* motives and niggardliness, discountenance and undermine your zealous and laudable attempt. Of the latter above all means beware. Be on your guard with respect to them and their counsels. ‘A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways:’ so also is a *two-faced man*. ‘Honesty is always the best policy.’ Once more, I say, my Unitarian brethren, persevere, and Heaven will bless your undertaking, and raise under your well directed efforts as respectable and flourishing a congregation as the North of Ireland can boast of.

“A UNITARIAN BROTHER.”

Obituary.

MR. GAWIN ORR.—This Christian Patriarch was removed from this world on the 7th of June, in the 75th year of his age. To peculiarity of manners, inseparable from humanity, and unavoidable in particular ages and countries, he added much good sense and great purity of morals. He was sincerely but rationally pious, and the firm advocate of religious liberty. He was for many years a decided Unitarian Christian; and notwithstanding the vain and worthless attempts that have been made, to connect the awful gloom of Calvinism with his death-bed scenes, he died in the pure and simple faith of the Gospel—believing in one God the Father, and receiving with a grateful heart Jesus Christ his Son, as the messenger of his mercy to an ignorant and a guilty world. Though his favourite

study was Mathematics, he encouraged, in various ways, education in general. Book Societies and Poor's Funds were promoted by his exertions; and he was a successful peacemaker, both able and willing to afford time in reconciling man to man. The Farming Societies of the Counties of Down and Antrim have lost a useful and unwearied supporter by his removal. Of the respectable Congregation of Moneyrea, he was a useful member through life, and for nearly forty years an active Elder. For the last twenty years he was not twenty times absent from public worship, and gave uniform proof that his religion was the fruit of a calm piety and a sober judgment, calculated to awe and silence the scoffer, to moderate the self-righteous fanatic, and to lead the humble and teachable mind, to "glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Correspondents.

The Review of Convocations in our next.

If we thought that the Rev. Robert Campbell's character required vindication, we should have published his reply to the Author of "The Broken Tombstone;" but we have two reasons for withholding it. We know that Mr. Campbell's character for veracity, and for every good and amiable quality, stands too high to be affected by any slander—and we are of opinion that the public have long since forgotten the calumny, while they will not lose their favourable impression of our friend: But if Mr. C. should still think it advisable to print his letter, we shall willingly give it place.

The Rev. W. Porter, in answer to the Rev. John Brown, in our next.

X. Y. Z. and other communications, came too late for our present number.

Communications, free of expense, to be forwarded to the Editors, care of Mr. SAMUEL ARCHER, Bookseller, High-street, BELFAST; who will likewise receive *Subscriptions* for the Work, and who will have *Advertisements* inserted on the cover on the following moderate terms:—a few lines, 4s.—half a page, 6s.—and a wholepage, 8s.

THE
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NO. VII.

AUGUST, 1830.

VOL. I.

Thoughts on the Recent Dissensions in the Presbyterian Church in this Country.

LETTER II.

THE recent dissensions in the Presbyterian Church present us with a mournful picture of human nature. We are carried back, in fancy, to those distant times when the Inquisition appears in gloomy perspective; and the torch, and the faggot, and persecution relieve the darkness of the scene. Happily for us we live under the protection of wise and equitable laws, which restrain the excessive ardor of those, who, in the pursuit of their favourite schemes, appear utterly regardless of the miseries they have caused; and, with the sternness of resolve, have sacrificed to their present views, early and fond recollections, and have rent asunder some of the holiest ties that bind man to this world. It is true that the dire tragedy of Servetus cannot be revived in these days; but the mantle of Calvin, who gloated with savage delight over the protracted sufferings of the hapless victim of intolerance, seem to have fallen on the shoulders of some of our modern reformers.

Yet I rejoice in the firm persuasion, that the very means which men, in their weakness, have devised for the suppression of liberal opinions, have been signally efficacious in extending and confirming them. And they who have been doomed to suffer, must have this consolation, that their trials have contributed to establish more firmly the great principles of religious liberty.

I congratulate the Remonstrant Presbyterians on their organization into an ecclesiastical Body; and I anticipate many advantages from a union in which talent, and integrity, and christian feeling are happily combined. Their meeting presented a delightful contrast to that of the General Synod of Ulster—the arena where some of the vilest passions of our nature have been exhibited to

a wondering multitude. But the present highly respected Moderator of the Remonstrant Synod must pardon me for presuming to correct some of the language he employed on that interesting occasion. They came not together "to lay the foundation stone of a temple dedicated to Religious Liberty." It was laid in this corner of our land more than one hundred years ago, by those distinguished men who were then compelled to withdraw themselves from the spiritual tyranny of the Synod of Ulster; and whose descendants, and successors, and people, continue to cherish their memories and advocate their principles. The ground of their separation was not a difference of opinion on doctrinal subjects, but upon the question of subscription to human creeds and articles of faith. The difficulties which these pious men had to encounter in those less enlightened times, from popular prejudices, were great; and the sacrifices were painful which they were required to make on the altar of Truth. Amongst those who stood forward at that eventful time, were men that would have done honour to any cause, and whose names must be mentioned with reverence, whilst a steady adherence to the cause of religious freedom, and an uncompromising obedience to the dictates of conscience, in opposition to all worldly views, are esteemed as virtues among mankind. The great bond of union between the Members of the Presbytery of Antrim is a belief in the Holy Scriptures, and in the unfettered right of individual judgment, in ascertaining and illustrating their doctrines. And whilst in the exercise of this glorious privilege, they cultivate that charity "which thinketh no evil," such differences of opinion are known to exist amongst them, as will unavoidably arise, where each man fearlessly pursues the unbiassed dictates of his own mind. That which binds them together, is not therefore a complete coincidence of opinion; nor is it the coarse tie of selfish interest; but it is the mild and tolerant spirit of the religion of the blessed Jesus, which teaches them to love one another—it is the feeling of sympathy, which, amid the wrongs, and misrepresentations, and injuries of the world, causes them to adhere to each other with cordial and unabated affection.

I am persuaded then, that the same feeling, as well as an agreement in their distinguishing principles, will dis-

pose the Presbytery of Antrim to regard, with the liveliest interest, and the warmest sympathy, their brethren who had to struggle with difficulties from which they have been emancipated ; and that the two bodies will zealously and heartily co-operate in promoting that glorious cause in which they are mutually embarked. And although the honour of founding the glorious structure, must be conceded to the Presbytery of Antrim ; yet the Remonstrant Synod have enlarged and adorned it—they have added *Corinthian Pillars* to that Temple, which I trust will long be sacred to truth, to virtue, and to freedom.

The advocates of religious liberty have no cause for despondency. It has indeed been usual, amongst other misrepresentations of their enemies, to affirm, that their principles are on the decline ; and, that if left alone, they will soon die a natural death. In reply to this, I would refer to the Protestant Churches in France ; and to Geneva, once the cradle of Calvinism, and now its grave ; and to the United States of America, where rational views of the Gospel, unfettered by worldly interest, and unsupported by worldly power, are extending themselves with a rapidity that baffles all calculation ; are taking deep root in a soil so congenial to their growth ; and will doubtless one day overspread that mighty land. Even amongst ourselves, I may venture to affirm, that on a fair enquiry into facts, notwithstanding popular excitement, it will appear that this cause is on the advance. Independently of the members of the Presbytery of Antrim, and the Synod of Munster, we are told by high authority, that previously to the late Secession, there were about forty-two ministers of the General Synod of Ulster, either openly or covertly attached to such opinions. I am ready to admit the correctness of this calculation. Already a number of Ministers, amounting to more than originally composed the Presbytery of Antrim, have withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the General Synod, rather than do violence to their own convictions : and if the computation be correct, it is evident that a still larger number remains imbued with similar opinions ; but who, from various causes, have been deterred from following the same honourable course ; and that such a portion of leaven, even secretly fermenting, will ultimately pervade a large mass of the community.

Under such circumstances, what is then the duty of the friends of rational Christianity? It is to bless God and to take courage. Let them with manly firmness, and, in the spirit of meekness, explain their peculiar views of religious truth. It is a reproach to the good cause, and I fear not an unfounded one, that Ministers have, in many instances, been studiously reserved on such subjects; and the people have been left to gather their opinions as they best could, amid the endless variety and confusion that prevail in the christian world. I am aware that this avoidance of doctrinal questions has often arisen from excellent motives; and that many good men have declined entering upon controversy, lest the peace of the Church should be endangered. But they have been unwittingly the means of creating the evil which they were anxious to shun. Her opponents, who are troubled with fewer scruples, have invariably taken advantage of this timidity; and with a zeal, and energy, and perseverance that would have done honour to a better cause, have entered upon the unoccupied ground, "have enlarged the places of their tents, lengthened their cords, and strengthened their stakes." When I look around me, I can reckon various instances where Ministers, of liberal opinions, who followed this *pacific*, or rather what I must term this *temporizing* system, have been succeeded by men of the most intolerant views. And I attribute it, without the least hesitation, to that mode which so long prevailed, of occupying the time of a Christian audience, with dry, moral discourses, that were not explanatory of the doctrine, nor enforced by the sanctions of the Gospel—that were delivered without energy, and heard without emotion. The people, under such a ministry, knew nothing whatever of the peculiar doctrines of the various sects; and were a blank sheet of paper on which the first daring hand inscribed his name, and the creed of his party. And, only that it might seem invidious, I could mention instances where the opposite course has been most happily pursued; where no reserve has been exercised; where opinions have been fully and freely discussed; and where they who have adopted this plan, have been more than repaid for all their troubles, by the prospect of extended usefulness, and the increased and undivided affections of their people.

I call then upon the friends of free inquiry to come forward, and cordially and fearlessly to state their views.

Their adversaries have taken advantage of their silence, and have charged them with entertaining opinions which they are either afraid or ashamed to avow. Come forward then, in all the simplicity and energy of truth; and suffer not the people to remain in ignorance, and "to halt between two opinions." A fair and candid discussion must be attended with the best effects. It will cover with shame those that have traduced you—it will lead to the diffusion of knowledge, of more enlarged views, and of more kind and liberal feelings. Believing, as I do, in the omnipotence of truth, I doubt not that these principles, founded as they are on reason, and the holy volume of inspiration, will ultimately prevail: that the shades of ignorance and bigotry which now obscure the moral horizon, will ere long be dispelled: and that the light which came from Heaven, will burst from behind the dark clouds which have intercepted its rays, and shine with renewed brightness over the world.

X. Y. Z.

A REVIEW OF SOME MODERN SYNODS.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 117.)

CONVOCATIONS.

This is a subject little understood, even by the profession, to which it properly belongs. It is enveloped in Antiquarian research, antiquated French and modern Latin. But I shall divest it of all these incumbrances, and keep clear of the bitter controversies by which it was yet farther perplexed. Neither can it be said to have any near connexion with the peculiar objects of *THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN*; but it is a curious point in Ecclesiastical History, and makes part of the Series of Modern Synods, which I have undertaken to discuss.

The English Convocation is now the shadow of an Ecclesiastical Parliament. The Civil and Ecclesiastical Institutions are coeval; and their origin equally obscure. It is a Synod peculiar to England. The only establishment resembling it is the Diet of Sweden, where the Ecclesiastics form one branch of the Legislature. The Chamber of Clergy is there composed of the Bishops and Superintendants; and also of Deputies, one of whom is chosen by every rural Deanery.

In the Saxon times, the great Council of the Nation was composed of the Nobility and other Tenants of the Crown, with the Bishops, Abbots, and certain Priors. The Bishops and Abbots sat as such, and not by right of their tenures. After the conquest, the Abbots sat by virtue of their tenures, as Barons; and the Bishops in a double capacity, as Bishops and Barons: for William thought proper to change the spiritual tenure under which they held their lands, during the Saxon government, into the feudal or Norman tenure, by Barony, which subjected their estates to all civil charges and assessments, from which they were before exempt. The Bishop of *Man* does not sit in Parliament; because he does not hold under the Crown, but under a subject, the Duke of Athol. The Bishop, therefore, could not be admitted into the King's great council. Attendance on Parliament was formerly considered, not an honour, but a duty: and the Abbots of Leicester and St. James's procured their names to be struck off the Roll, because they did not hold by Barony or in Chief, but by Frank Almoigne, *in libera eleemosyna*.

When the great council took the form and name of a Parliament, the Bishops and Clergy were summoned to meet in Convocation; the Bishops and Mitred Abbots forming the Upper House, and the Proctors (*Procuratores*) of the inferior Clergy, the Lower. The Bishops, however, retained their seats in the House of Lords, as Barons; and it was customary for the Temporal Lords to adjourn on certain days, that the Bishops might attend the Convocation.

The Upper House, before the Reformation, consisted of the Archbishop and his Suffragan Bishops, Mitred Abbots, and certain Priors.

The Lower House was composed of the Inferior Clergy. The Chapters were at first represented by their Deans or Priors, as the Diocesan Clergy were by their Archdeacons. At a later period each chapter chose one Proctor or Deputy, and every Archdeaconry two: and where there were more than one Archdeaconry, the Bishop, out of those chosen, selected two to be sent to Convocation. The Deans and Archdeacons, however, continued to sit in Convocation.

“Before the Reformation the Bishops sat in Parliament with their Mitres on their heads, and, (if I mis-

take not), in their Copes and Pontifical Vestments, at least when the King was present. But since that time they have contented themselves, on that occasion, with the plain Scarlet Habit of a Doctor of Divinity. The white linen Rochet or Lawn Sleeves, which they ordinarily wear in Parliament, as also in the exercise of their functions, is no more than the common and every day habit of a Bishop: for formerly all Bishops wore white, even when they travelled, except when they hunt."—HODY. p. 141; where more may be seen concerning the changes of Episcopal Habits.

The following was the manner of holding a Convocation before the Reformation:—The Members were summoned by the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury, not of the King, to meet at St. Paul's. After prayers and sermon, they proceeded in order to the Chapter-House, where the Archbishop and Bishops took their seats, the Clergy standing; who were directed to retire to the Lower House and elect a Prolocutor or Speaker, and present him to the Archbishop. The Clergy appointed one of the King's Counsellors or Chaplains to preside at the election. Two Doctors were then deputed to present the Prolocutor to the Archbishop, who confirmed the election by his Archiepiscopal authority, and then adjourned to King Henry VII.'s Chapel. The Prolocutor attended in the Upper House when required by them, or deputed with a message from the Lower. They continued to assemble, till dissolved by the King. Before the Reformation, the Archbishop was their supreme head, under the Pope. They were convened by his authority, but in consequence of a *Letter of Request* (*Rogando mandamus*) from the King.

The Convocation followed the practice, and assumed the forms and privileges of Parliament. As the Members of Parliament, who now make two Houses, sat together originally; so did those of the Convocation: but the Lower House was subordinate to the Upper; and the Archbishop was the head of both. He summoned the Bishops personally, like the Lords; and the inferior Clergy after the manner of the Commons—some for the dioceses, others for the cathedrals, corresponding with the knights and citizens. The Bishops, like the Sheriffs, "executed the writs on their Clergy. At the opening of the Convocation, the Lower House

attended at the bar of the Upper, as the Commons do at the bar of the Lords, and were ordered to elect and present their Prolocutor, as the Commons do their Speaker; the Proctors also received wages from their Constituents, as the Commons did. The Lower House voted separate Subsidies or Money Bills, and presented them to the King or the Archbishop, and complained of grievances. They also exercised jurisdiction, and inflicted imprisonment, and Ecclesiastical Punishments on their own Members, and sent up impeachments to the Upper House. Their Members, like the Commons, were free from arrest during the Sessions.

This was the practice in the Province of Canterbury; but there was also a Convocation held by the Archbishop of York.

In very early times there was a dispute between these Prelates; York refusing subjection to Canterbury, although it had been yielded by his predecessors. It was, however, solemnly determined, by a great Council, first held at Winchester, and then at Windsor, 1127: "That the Archbishop of York and his Clergy should attend the Archbishop's Conciliary Meetings and Summons."

"This is the first Ecclesiastical Council that appears to have been held at the same time with a Convention of the Nobility, and yet in a separate place."

But this rule was broken through, in less than fifty years, and the See of York, by favour of the Pope, was made independent. The Archbishop of York was accordingly allowed to hold his Convocation in his own Province; and though they were summoned to meet Parliament, sufficient obedience was understood to be paid to the Writ, if they met about the same time, and to the same purpose, to be ready to hear what was proposed from the King; to give their advice when asked, and their consent when requisite; to offer their aids and their petitions, and answer the necessary affairs of the King and Kingdom.—Thus the forms were kept up, and the King's right asserted and owned. This took place, at first, by the connivance of the Crown; the Archbishop sending out a provincial citation; which gave birth to the practice of issuing two Convocation Writs. But York assembled a fortnight later than the other Province, that Canterbury might set a precedent for them to follow. This York must have done, had they met in

one body, since it would then compose a small minority. Without this understanding, the Crown would not have consented to their separation. Thus in the reign of Edward III. it was stated, "that the Archbishop of Canterbury and other Nobles should require the Archbishop of York to contribute for the defence of the North, as they had done." Even in Church Acts, what had passed the one was a kind of law to the other. This practice continued as long as Convocations were allowed to act.

The Convocation of the Province of York assembled in one chamber, on account of the fewness of their number. Atterbury says, that, when he wrote, the Writ for the Province of York had been dropped; and adds, in his sarcastic style: "through forgetfulness, no doubt; and it may so happen, that the Writ for the Province of Canterbury shall be forgotten too."

Henry VIII. set an example, which was wisely followed by the Long Parliament, with respect to the Assembly of Divines. By the Act of Submission, it was enacted—1. That the Convocation should thenceforth be assembled by the King's writ: 2. That it should make no Canons or Constitutions but by virtue of the King's license, first given them so to do: 3. That being agreed on any canons or constitutions, they should neither publish nor execute them, without the King's confirmation: Nor, 4thly, by his authority execute any, but with these limitations; that they be neither against the King's prerogative, nor against any common or statute law; nor, finally, in any respect, contrary to the customs of the realm.

The Convocation was summoned with every new Parliament; and was adjourned, prorogued, and dissolved simultaneously with the Lords and Commons. For 150 years, they assembled within a day of the meeting of Parliament; at other times somewhat later, that the Bishops might attend the House of Lords, at their first meeting. Since the Revolution, they have met on the same day, that is nominally, for the Convocation is convened only *pro forma*. The abrupt dissolution of Parliament in 1640, interrupted the proceedings of the Convocation; but Archbishop Laud had so many favourite objects in view, that he was anxious to continue the sitting. To effect this, one of the Members produced a precedent in the reign of Elizabeth. It appeared, that

the Clergy granted a Subsidy or Benevolence of two shillings in the pound, to be raised upon all the Clergy, after Parliament was risen, and levying it by their own Synodical act, under the penalty of Ecclesiastical censures. Hence it was concluded, that the Convocation might sit, independent of the Parliament; and therefore, instead of dissolving, they adjourned, to take further advice. Laud then applied to the King, for a commission to continue the Convocation. The case was referred to the Judges, the majority of whom gave it as their opinion, "That the Convocation, being called by the King's Writ, under the Great Seal, doth continue till it be dissolved by Writ or Commission under the Great Seal, notwithstanding the Parliament be dissolved." Upon this the Convocation re-assembled, and granted the Crown £120,000. Even Atterbery condemns this procedure; and at the Restoration, in the Act restoring Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, their canons were excepted from Parliamentary confirmation, particularly and by name. I have been more minute on this point, because these canons are still in use, though they have no force in law. The Clergy were disgusted with them on several accounts; and especially with the grant, because, though the Bishops might give their own money, if they pleased, the Representative Members had no right to vote away the property of their constituents, after the term of delegation expired.

As to the state of the Convocation at present, we are told by Blackstone, "that the Spiritual Lords consist of two Archbishops and twenty-four Bishops; and that, at the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII., they included likewise twenty-six mitred Abbots and two Priors. As head of the Church, the King convenes, prorogues, restrains, regulates, and dissolves all Ecclesiastical Synods or Convocations. This was an ancient prerogative of the Crown long before the time of Henry VIII. He restrained the Convocation from making or putting in execution any canons repugnant to the King's prerogative, or the laws, statutes, and customs of the realm; and made the King's assent actually necessary to the validity of every canon. The Convocation differs from the Synods of other kingdoms; those consisting solely of Bishops; whereas with us the Convocation is the miniature of Parliament, wherein the Archbishop

presides with Regal state. The Upper House of Bishops represents the House of Lords ; and the Lower House, composed of Representatives of the several dioceses at large, and of each particular chapter therein, resembles the House of Commons, with its knights of the shire and burgesses. This Constitution is said to be owing to the policy of Edward I., who thereby let in the inferior Clergy to the privilege of forming Ecclesiastical Canons, which before they had not ; and also introduced a method of taxing Ecclesiastical benefices, by consent of Convocation.”—*Blackstone*, 1. 7.

“ All Deans and Archdeacons are members of the Convocation of their Province ; each Chapter sends one Proctor or Representative ; and the Parochial Clergy in each Diocese in Canterbury two Proctors : but, on account of the small number of Dioceses in the Province of York, each Archdeaconry elects two Proctors. In York the Convocation consists of one House ; but in Canterbury there are two Houses, of which the 22 Bishops form the Upper House ; and before the Reformation, Abbots, Priors, and other mitred Prelates sat with the Bishops. The Lower House of Convocation in Canterbury consists of 22 Deans, 53 Archdeacons, 24 Proctors for the Chapters, and 44 Proctors for the Parochial Clergy. By 8, Henry VI., the Clergy, in their attendance upon Convocation, have the same privilege in freedom from arrest, as the Members of the House of Commons in their attendance upon Parliament.”

“ From Blackstone’s text it might be supposed, that there is only one Convocation. But the King, before the meeting of every new Parliament, directs his Writ to each Archbishop to summon a Convocation in his peculiar province.”—*Christian’s Notes on Blackstone*.

The consideration of the Irish Convocation, and other particulars, must be deferred for the present.

ERASMUS.

TRINITY.

WITH respect to this much disputed, and ever to be disputed doctrine of the Trinity, it is not easy to know where to begin or where to end one's observations. It is truly an endless controversy: for which one among many reasons is, the difference with regard to the premises from which our conclusions are to be drawn.—Some, like ourselves, adhere to Scripture alone, using the very best text we can for ascertaining its true meaning. Others are as much, or, to speak truly, a vast deal more influenced by the determination of creeds than by the Holy Scripture. These creeds are all of man's composition, and become more explicit, precise, and full on this disputed doctrine, in proportion as the time in which they were composed recedes from the primitive and Scriptural time. It will follow then, from this remarkable fact of these creeds being most particular and minute on points that are left indefinite or not even hinted at in Scripture, that the person who forms his opinions from a creed, and he who is content with the original records of what Jesus and his Apostles did and taught, will come to very different conclusions, and form very different opinions. There can be very little risk in hazarding the assertion, that of all the believers in the Trinity there is hardly one that has deduced this system of belief from Scripture only: that, almost to a man, they have been previously initiated into some creed; have imbibed the doctrine from it, and then supported it, as far as possible, by Scripture. There would be as little risk in saying, that if you could select a thousand men, of the most pious and serious turn of mind, who had never heard, from any quarter, of the doctrine of the Trinity, and set them down to read the New Testament with all due care, for the purpose of stating their view of the opinions and doctrines therein expressed—not one of this thousand (and, if you made it ten thousand, the result would be the same,) would rise from the perusal with the most distant notion of a Trinity of persons in one Godhead: not one that would not subject himself to all the curses of the Athanasian creed. It is, I conceive, an utter impossibility that he should ever deduce

deduce such propositions as these, (and without deducing them very precisely he must perish everlastingly,) "The Father is eternal, the Son eternal, the Holy Ghost eternal, and yet they are not three eternals, but one eternal. So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghost Almighty, and yet they are not three Almighties, but one Almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and yet they are not three Gods, but one God."

Now I maintain that it is an utter impossibility that any man, of sound understanding, should ever deduce one of these propositions from Scripture only. Nay, further, it is impossible to prove any one of these propositions from Scripture. And I may ask, is this what was to be expected, if the doctrine of the Trinity were the Grand Truth to be revealed;—and I answer, most certainly not.

In order to form a correct judgment of what you might naturally expect to find in such a case, we should consider in particular, that the whole world must be supposed to be ignorant of this truth; nor will it, I believe, be denied, that there was not an individual in the world that knew any thing of a Trinity in Unity at all, much less as explained by the Athanasian Creed. We may assume this, though we are presented with this very remarkable fact, in the course of the controversies on this subject, that some pretend to prove the Christian Trinity from the works of the idolatrous Philosopher Plato: and because Plato speaks of a Triad, meaning the three sons of Noah deified, they make him anticipate the Lord Jesus himself in the great truth which he was to reveal.

We are also to consider, that it is a very momentous truth—and that particularly to the Jews, it would, at first sight at least, have the appearance of completely annulling the main principle of their law, that the Lord our God is one Lord. From every circumstance connected with the doctrine too, it must have taken the strongest possible hold of the minds of the Apostles. It was new, and most strange. Every time they reflected that the Lord God Almighty had lived with them in form like one of themselves—that they had conversed with the Omnipotent as a man would do with his friend: that they had questioned him: reasoned with him: dis-

puted with one another in his presence: that they had seen others treat him with still greater familiarity: and above all, when they called to mind the eventful scenes of the last night, and felt that it was to God himself that all these indignities were offered—that it was the voice of God himself that was unable to make them throw off their drowsiness—that it was God himself that Judas kissed, Peter denied, and all the Jews, both priests and rabble, treated with such indignity, scorn, and cruelty: I say then, that every time they reflected on these, and a multitude of other circumstances that would crowd into their minds, their whole souls must have been occupied with this single thought. Strange then indeed is it, that it does not appear with greater clearness in their writings; that in all their compositions we have none of those reflections that would naturally and unavoidably present themselves to the thoughts of any one of us that should witness such things. Strange that we have no where any arguments to show the consistency of the Trinity with the great truth that the Jews were to maintain, that there is but one God. Strange that there does not seem to be any charge of such inconsistency made by their enemies. Strange that out of the many and most formidable objections that could be made by Jews and Gentiles to this remarkable doctrine of the Creator of all things, who is not worshipped by men's hands as though he needed any thing, should yet hunger and thirst—be in danger of perishing by shipwreck—have to remove himself secretly, to avoid being precipitated down a rock by his own creatures—should have become subject to all our infirmities; not one is brought forward that turns upon the incongruity and incompatibility of all these circumstances, with the idea of that Being, of whom, to whom, and through whom are all things.

We are to bear in mind, that the Jews were very anxious to find objections—that they did endeavour to prevent the dissemination of the doctrine of Christ—that they took great trouble to prevent the resurrection, if possible, and to detect the imposture if there were any: Is it not passing strange then, that none of them ever addressed the Apostles thus—Do you pretend to say, that that person whom we saw living among us—growing up from childhood—coming up regularly to our

feasts—offering his prayers and sacrifices with as much earnestness and humility as ourselves, was the God to whom we were offering our sacrifices? Do you say that Omnipotence and Omniscience were circumscribed by a human body : or that they did not address the multitude in such words as these—Will you desert the Lord God of your fathers, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and worship a man that you have seen and touched—that you know was born—fed and lived as we do—was of like passions with us—and died upon the cross? What adds to the strangeness of all this is, that the very objections which, as I am now supposing, might be most naturally brought against this doctrine, were actually alledged by the natives of Nazareth, as rendering the wisdom with which he spake, and the mighty works which he did, still more marvellous.—“Whence hath this man this wisdom and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary; and his brethren James and Joses and Simon and Judas? And his sisters—are they not all with us? Whence, then, has this man these things?” With what unspeakably greater force might it have been asked—How can you expect us to believe that this is our God most High and Holy, whom the Heavens and Heaven of Heavens cannot contain? Is not this the carpenter’s son? &c. &c.

Always bearing in mind what the Orthodox assert, that the preaching of Jesus to be one of the persons of the Holy and undivided Trinity, was the great aim of all the Apostles’ preaching—that it was the one saving truth—and that the knowledge of it was indispensable to the salvation of every person; we are then to endeavour to account for this most extraordinary of all facts, that in no one place where the Apostles preached the Gospel, do we find this truth (if it be one) insisted on, that the Resurrection of Christ in particular is every where proclaimed, and the Trinity no where.

V. D. M.

THE REMONSTRANT SYNOD,

AND

" THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN."

THERE is no species of obloquy or injury which their enemies have been able to inflict, that has not been unsparingly heaped upon the Remonstrants during the last three years, because they have been firm and honest enough "to keep a conscience." The pulpit has been profaned with the most calumnious misrepresentations of their Doctrines; the press has groaned with libels, under the mock title of religious Tracts and Pamphlets; secret emissaries have stolen into the houses of their hearers, in order "to lead captive silly women," by the most insidious slanders; infuriated mobs have been instigated to break open their Meeting-houses, to insult their persons, and to preclude them from the lawful enjoyment of their own property; landlords have interfered, both directly and indirectly, to deprive them of their people, and their means of subsistence; and, in one case, the Civil Magistrate has been led, by the most disgraceful intrigues and falsehoods, to violate the liberty of a British subject, on the Lord's Day, in the person of an aged Minister of the Gospel, who was peaceably proceeding to worship God, in his own Meeting-house! It might be thought, that such acts as these, aided by the thousand arts of social persecution which have been industriously, and, in too many cases, successfully employed, would have been sufficient to satisfy the most determined hostility, and to fill up the cup of vengeance. I have incidentally seen, however, a statement contained in an *Official Document*, lately transmitted to Government by the Moderator of the Synod of Ulster, which amply proves that a still more deadly assault is meditated against "heresy," than any which has been yet attempted. The statement to which I refer is evidently intended as "a pilot balloon"—something sent up to try how the wind blows at Dublin Castle. The advisers of the Moderator have not yet had the hardihood, unblushingly to approach the Government of the country, and to say, "We have broken faith with our brethren;

we have driven them from amongst us, by unprecedented and tyrannical enactments ; we have done them all the evil we could, in our private and ecclesiastical capacity, and we now solicit you to crown our wishes by depriving them of the *Royal Bounty* :” No, they have not yet had the audacity thus to address an equitable Christian Administration ; but they have had the dastardly meanness to attempt, “ by a side wind,” exciting against the Remonstrants *the odium theologicum* in high places, in order to draw down upon them the displeasure of Government. Writing to the Irish Secretary, on a subject in which the Remonstrants have no concern, the Moderator has been advised, indecorously *to drag them forward*, in a statement which is equally invidious and untrue. His words are : “ The separation between the Synod and the Arians has been a question of *Doctrine*.” This is but a short sentence, and yet it contains *two, direct, positive, wilful mis-statements*. It is *not true*, that the Remonstrants, as a body, are *Arians* ; or that they separated from the Synod *as such* : and it is *not true*, that their “ separation was a question of *Doctrine*.” Their separation, as they have constantly declared, “ was a question, not of *Doctrine*, but of *Discipline*.” They never quarrelled with the Synod, because it contained Trinitarians and Calvinists ; and they are perfectly willing to receive such into their *own Body*, if chosen by the people : but they left the Synod, because it enacted tyrannical laws subversive of the rights of conscience ; and they would have done the same, had the like means been adopted to advance the interests of Unitarianism, or any other system of *Doctrine*. These facts were perfectly known to the Moderator, when he wrote to Lord Gower ; indeed, they were registered in official documents in his own possession : and, I hereby accuse him, before the world, of having stated, for the evident purpose of injuring his brethren, *what he knew to be contrary to fact*. I accuse him, however, only in his *official capacity* ; deeply lamenting that he was made the agent of the worthless designs of others. Much as he has fallen in public estimation, during his year of “ brief authority,” in consequence of the degrading work which he has been obliged to perform, I am loath, very loath, to believe that *Robert Park* is an evil-minded man. I am satisfied, that the deadly project of drawing down the

vengeance of the Government upon the Remonstrants, never originated with *him*. It had a deeper, a darker, a more congenial source. Indeed, it was once avowed, in an unguarded moment ; and the internal workings of the spirit that conceived it, have incidentally broken out upon several occasions. And is this the fruit of Synodical Orthodoxy? Oh! what a wretched tree must that be, which produces such unhallowed fruit! Yet, the author and abettors of this infamous scheme *say*, that they are under the immediate instruction and guidance of the Holy Spirit! The audacity of the common swearer is not comparable to this. How dare they talk of sacred names, and heavenly influences, whilst they are planning the desolation of their unoffending brethren! The Holy Spirit! We know that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Are such *their* fruits? Or are they not rather the fruits of the flesh, "hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, envyings, and such like"? "Wherefore, by their fruits shall ye know them." Oh! how widely are those bitter fruits scattered over the Province of Ulster! There is scarcely a Congregation, scarcely a house, in which they are not to be found. The attempt, however, to engage the Government, in a crusade against conscience, must fail. Providentially, our statesmen have outrun our divines; and, I am persuaded, there will never be an Administration in Britain, that will become the agent of intriguing and persecuting priests, and the enemy of religious liberty. That the attempt has been made, I do not regret; for, its total failure will teach a salutary lesson: and the fact of its having been so ingeniously made, affords an illustration of principles and character, superior to a thousand arguments.

Before leaving this part of my subject, however, I demand of the Rev. Robert Park, *by what authority* he wrote to the Irish Government concerning the grounds of separation between the Remonstrants and the Synod? He signed his name as "Moderator of the General Synod of Ulster;" but, I have vainly looked into the Minutes of that Body, for any power conferred upon him to communicate with the Government on such a subject. Did he, of his own mere humour, write in the name of the Synod? Or did he obey the orders of some *clerical*

conclave, having no more authority than himself to meddle in the matter? I strongly suspect, that he acted under the instruction of the "Heart-Probing Committee," who have virtually assumed to themselves the entire power of the Synod of Ulster. Mr. Park owes it to himself and to the public, to show the *authority* under which he acted, in making an *unfounded* statement to Government concerning his brethren.

I scarcely know, whether the Remonstrants ought to be considered *fortunate*, or *unfortunate*, in being the objects of bitter and unwearied misrepresentation. Perhaps, in certain views, they are both. *Fortunate*, they assuredly are, in possessing principles and characters, which cannot be assailed by the weapons of honourable argument and Christian truth; and which their opponents consequently seek to tarnish by slanderous misstatements—*unfortunate*, in being compelled to live in a state of perpetual warfare, exposed to obloquy in ten thousand places where they have no opportunity of self-vindication, and subjected to serious worldly loss and affliction in the maintenance of their integrity. For some time, the attacks of their enemies, though abundantly numerous and envenomed, were comparatively desultory and ill-concerted; but, during the last nine months, they have proceeded upon a plan of regular organization. "*The Orthodox Presbyterian*," relying upon the ready assent of prejudice, the unreasoning acquiescence of ignorance, the rancour of sectarian and party animosity, and the certainty of an extensive infusion of poison where no antidote can follow it, has poured forth periodical torrents of abuse, with an open disregard of decency and shame, totally unequalled even in the bitter annals of religious controversy. The grossest absurdities of *infidelity* have been carefully selected, and published to the world as the opinions of the Remonstrants: the shocking imprecations of irreligious mobs have been audaciously represented as the natural offspring of Unitarianism: and tales, of foreign lands, full of blasphemy and horror, have been invented, in order to mislead and inflame the minds of the ignorant. Many persons imagined, when the early numbers of this degraded Publication appeared, that the violence and recklessness of its spirit would speedily exhaust its own unhallowed energies; but, they who thought thus, little

knew the untameableness of sectarian rancour, and the insatiable cravings of ambition and revenge. Each succeeding number has outstripped its precursor, in the extent and grossness of its misrepresentations ; and, sixteen pages of the publication for June, are occupied with such a sustained abuse of "*The Remonstrant Synod*," as might justly entitle it to the appellation conferred upon a celebrated quack medicine—"The Concentrated Essence of Vipers."

In one respect, that miserable article is truly gratifying. The Remonstrants, aware of human weakness, might possibly have doubted the soundness of some of their own views, or they might have been deceived by the generous sympathy and universal approbation of their enlightened friends ; but, the purity of their principles and the propriety of their proceedings have received the most unequivocal confirmation, in the virulent attack of their enemies. I firmly believe, that there is but *one man* in the kingdom, capable of writing *such* an article ; and, every sentence exhibits his name, as clearly as if it were written upon the page in characters of brass. Unhappy man ! His fury knows no bounds : his intended victims have escaped from his vengeance ; they have found a secure asylum in the strength of a righteous cause, and the protection of the virtuous and the humane ; and, with all the wild improvidence of ungoverned passion, he has rushed into the conflict without his shield. In his eagerness to destroy others, he has forgotten his own safety : not considering, that he who brings unfounded accusations against men of established integrity, only stamps the brand of "*calumniator*" upon his own forehead. There is scarcely a crime in the catalogue of offences, with which he has not charged the members of the Remonstrant Synod. They are represented as hypocrites, liars, slanderers, deceivers of the people, soul-destroyers, and enemies of the Holy Spirit. In two or three sentences, he five times accuses them of uttering *wilful falsehoods*. The wretched man must have been "drunk with choler," when he ventured to prefer such charges against men, whose veracity, even as individuals, has never experienced even the slightest taint, and who must have been worse than deranged, if they conspired to make false statements in public, and in their collective capacity, upon the most solemn and interesting oc-

casion of their lives, whilst they were surrounded by hundreds, both of friends and enemies, who had ample means of knowing the truth or falsehood of their allegations. It would have been bad enough to have brought such "railing accusations" against them, had they been men whose statements on oath had been contradicted by many persons of the highest character and attainments—had they lain down a hundred times under public charges of wilful and malicious falsehood—had they been openly convicted of deliberately *misquoting* the Word of God in order to injure their fellow-men—had they leagued with atheists and debauchees in their crusades against conscience—or had their solemn testimony upon oath, and their public declarations, been exhibited in direct opposition to each other, until even their wonted effrontery forsook them, and they "blubbered" under the exposure like a whipped child. Had the Remonstrants been men of such characters, the slanders of "The Orthodox Presbyterian" might have obtained some credence: but, in good sooth, even the writer of that vile article could not, and did not, believe one item of the charges which he preferred against them. To use his own elegant phraseology—"he *knew* that the charges could not be *true*; but no matter for that; the sentence had to be filled up, and the public mind deceived." Persons in England, Scotland, America, and other places to which the refutation of the calumnies can never extend, will be taught to look upon the Separatists from the Synod of Ulster, both lay and clerical, as a *mere handful* of worthless and obscure individuals. Nay, perhaps, even the Government of the country might be induced, by dexterous misrepresentations, to view them in this light; and then, the draught of vengeance would be doubly sweet.

The accomplishment of this last *benevolent* design seems to be the great object of the first three pages of "The Orthodox Presbyterian," which the writer terms "Statistics." He ventures to assert, that "the Remonstrants do not embrace within the sphere of their Ministry, a population which, at the most liberal estimate, would outnumber two of our large Orthodox congregations." He then enumerates the seventeen Remonstrant congregations: and, true to his principles, his remarks, from beginning to end, are little more than a series of misrepresentations. To follow him through his entire

course, would be both fatiguing and unprofitable. I shall therefore, only expose a few of his mis-statements, as a fair sample of the whole. He speaks of "*Newry*, as being divided into an Arian and Orthodox congregation: the latter a flourishing settlement remains with the Synod." Now, is not this statement evidently intended to impress upon the public mind, that the congregation of Newry was rent into two *equal parts*? But what are the facts? From that large and important society, only about forty families withdrew; and these, with a very few exceptions, persons in the humbler walks of life.—The places of the Seceders have been long since filled up; and Newry is, at this moment, what it has been for more than a century, one of the largest, most intelligent, and most respectable congregations in Ulster. Blessed, in the Rev. John Mitchell, with a truly Christian Minister—a man of apostolic purity and integrity, who, by his meekness, his talents, and his unanswerable volume of Sermons, has rendered invaluable service to the cause of "pure and undefiled religion"—the congregation of Newry has no superior amongst the Presbyterians of Ireland. *Banbridge* has been equally misrepresented by "The Orthodox Presbyterian," "as separated into Arian and Orthodox." About thirty families, of very little social importance, left the ministry of their excellent and gifted minister, the Rev. James Davis, and, with a number of Methodists and members of Calvinistic congregations in the vicinity, formed themselves into a new society. The ancient and respectable congregation, however, sustained no loss by this trifling secession: the vacancies have been rapidly supplied by the hearers of Orthodox Ministers in the neighbourhood: and Banbridge was never more numerous and influential than at the present time. The misrepresentations concerning *Ballycarry* are remarkably gross. "We believe," says the Orthodox scribe, "that a great majority of the people have firmly adhered to the Synod." How this could be *believed*, in direct opposition to what the writer *well knew to be the fact*, I cannot pretend to say; but this, I do assert, that notwithstanding the basest and foulest arts, and the most disgraceful violations of friendship, intended to effectuate his ruin, that able and intrepid minister, Wm. Glendy, still retains, at least, *three-fourths* of his original congregation, and has received several valuable

accessions to his numbers from the flock of the Rev. J. S. Reid. The mis-statements respecting *Grey-Abbey* are even farther from the truth. Instead of the few contemptible individuals who adhere to the Synod "being nearly equal" to those who remain with the Remonstrants, they do not, at the highest calculation, amount to *one tenth* part of that ancient and numerous congregation. I might easily expose other statements equally unfounded; but what I have already said must be amply sufficient to show the reliance which ought to be placed upon the "*Statistics*" of "*The Orthodox Presbyterian.*"

The *fact* is, so far from the Remonstrant Congregations being inconsiderable, *even in a numerical point of view*, they are perfectly able, even in that respect, to bear an average comparison with any equal number, in the same classes of Bounty, belonging to the General Synod of Ulster. And, if we look at their social importance, their enlightened intelligence, their moral respectability, their generous sentiments, and the extent of their property, I fearlessly assert, that in all these respects, the *seventeen* Remonstrant congregations, would outweigh *one hundred* which I could mention in connexion with the Synod. That this may not appear to be a vain boast, I shall take the most accurate criterion by which a comparative estimate can be formed, viz.: the stipend paid by the respective congregations. Dr. Cooke admitted, at the late Synod of Ulster, in Omagh, "that there were many ministers in that Body who did not receive *Ten Pounds* per annum, from their people." I know that on another occasion, he mentioned one who did not receive more than *Five Pounds*. Let the higher sum, however, be taken, and on their own showing, Banbridge would equal *eight* such congregations, Dro-more *eight*, Moneyrea *eight*, Dunmurry *fifteen*, Newry *twenty*, and many others from *five* to *six*. Take the same *classes* in the General Synod, as in the Remonstrant, and the comparison, in most cases, will be decidedly in favour of the latter. Even Carlingford, the smallest Remonstrant settlement, and which is better now than when the Synod erected it, would rise far above "many" Synodical Congregations.

The reverend writer of these Presbyterian Statistics, however, not only forgot to state the truth with regard to the Remonstrants, but, he likewise omitted to men-

tion, that even of Congregations which still adhere to the Synod, the great majority of those who possess intelligence, property, and the highest moral respectability, are attached to the principles of the Remonstrants. This fact he knows right well; for he is *intimately* acquainted with the Congregation of *Killileagh*. He *knows* that *there* almost all the leading families are opposed to the Synod. He *knows* that the Remonstrants have likewise hosts of friends in Killinchy, Saintfield, Comber, Carrickfergus, Ballymoney, Armagh, Strabane, and multitudes of other places. In short, he well *knows*, that there is scarcely a Congregation in Ulster, in which the Remonstrant principles are not making rapid progress: and, if I mistake not, he will, ere long, witness manifestations of this fact, in quarters where the public little expect them. When he next writes on the subject of "Statistics," let him state the *whole truth*, and he will then admit, that, over all Ireland, the great preponderance of Presbyterian intelligence and respectability, is on the side of those whom he has so often maligned, and so grievously injured.

The public are deeply concerned in the question--what are those "many congregations" referred to by Dr. Cooke, "that do not pay 10*l.* a-year to their respective ministers?" Can they be those ancient and happy societies, of whose prosperity and increase we heard so much in a late number of "The Orthodox Presbyterian," in consequence of "their having enjoyed the blessed labours of an Orthodox ministry?" I verily believe, that some of them are; and the truth, for once, has come out by accident. The great majority of them, however, are those wretched "New Erections," which have been so lavishly praised as symptoms of the increasing piety of the times; but, which, in reality, every sensible man has looked upon as indications of the evils attendant on the miserable dissensions of the Synod of Ulster. Wherever a few restless or ambitious individuals could be found, some Minister, who wished to annoy his brother, gave them encouragement to commence a new congregation. Names were easily collected; lists of Stipend formed; some Presbytery took them up as a "promising new society;" contributions were levied off the public, "under false pretences," for building a Meeting-house; and a Minister was sometimes ordained

before the foundation stone was laid, that he might become a regular "official beggar." Our readers must be aware, how many persons of this description have teased and afflicted the country for some years past; and had the community known the real state of the case, and withheld their money from impostors, many wretched Ministers would this day have had the good fortune *not* to be the pastors of congregations that are either so *poor* or so *mean*, as to permit them to *starve* on *ten pounds* per annum. Each of these congregations, however, actually *promised to pay*, at least, *fifty pounds* a year to a Minister; and, on this *solemn pledge*, application was made to Government for *Bounty*. It now appears that they only made a *false shew* of paying stipend, in order to have their Minister pensioned by the public; and the Synod of Ulster appear to connive at a scandalous breach of compact, and a base attempt to *rob the country* for the benefit of those who are equally dishonourable and dishonest. These proceedings, however, are all quite *Orthodox*: but, I trust, they will open the eyes of those who have been *gulled* into contributions for unnecessary Meeting-houses; and also show to Government, the propriety of strict investigation, before they grant the hard earned money of the people, to men that ask it under "false pretences."

In my next I thall expose "*The Orthodox Presbyterian's*" misrepresentations of the Resolutions adopted by the Remonstrant Synod.

A REMONSTRANT.

SCRIPTURE ITS OWN INTERPRETER.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 270.)

2 THES. i. 1. 2. 3.—"Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the Church of the Thessalonians in *God our Father*, and the *Lord Jesus Christ*. Grace be unto you and peace from *God our Father* and the *Lord Jesus Christ*. We are bound to thank *God* always for you, &c."

— 6. 7. 8.—"Seeing it is a righteous thing with *God* to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you: and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the *Lord Jesus* shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not *God*, and that obey not the Gospel of our *Lord Jesus Christ*."

2 THES. i. 12.—“That the name of our *Lord Jesus Christ* may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our *God* and the *Lord Jesus Christ*.”

— ii. 13. 14.—“But we are bound to give thanks alway to *God* for you, brethren, beloved of the *Lord*, because *God* hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth: whereunto he called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our *Lord Jesus Christ*.”

— 16.—“Now our *Lord Jesus Christ* himself, and *God* even our Father, which hath loved us and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace: comfort your hearts and stablish you in every good word and work.”

1 TIM. i. 1. 2.—“Paul, an Apostle of *Jesus Christ* by the commandment of *God* our saviour, and *Lord Jesus Christ* which is our hope: unto Timothy, my own son in the faith, grace, mercy, and peace from *God* our Father and *Jesus Christ* our Lord.”

— 17.—“Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the *only wise God*, be honour and glory for ever and ever, amen.”

— ii. 3—6.—“For this is good and acceptable in the sight of *God* our Saviour: who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the Truth: for there is one *God* and one mediator between *God* and man—the man *Christ Jesus*, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”

— v. 21.—“I charge thee before *God*, and the *Lord Jesus Christ*, and the *elect Angels*, &c.”

— vi. 13.—16.—“I give thee charge in the sight of *God*, who quickeneth all things, and before *Christ Jesus*, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession: that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our *Lord Jesus Christ*: which in his times he shall show who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen or can see, to whom be honour and power everlasting.”

2 TIM. i. 1. 3.—“Paul an Apostle of *Jesus Christ*, by the will of *God*, according to the promise of life which is in *Christ Jesus*, to Timothy my dearly beloved son: grace, mercy, and peace from *God* the Father and *Christ Jesus* our Lord. I thank *God* whom I serve from my forefathers with a pure conscience, &c.”

TITUS, i. 4.—“Grace, mercy, and peace from *God* the Father and the *Lord Jesus Christ*, our Saviour.”

— ii. 13.—“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great *God* and our Saviour *Jesus Christ* who gave himself for us, &c.”

— iii. 4.—6.—“But after that the kindness and love of *God* our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through *Jesus Christ* our Saviour.”

The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians was written partly to remove an erroneous impression which the for-

mer letter had made upon their minds, with respect to the second coming of our Lord ; and, in explaining this, he opens some prophetic views as to defections from the truth in later times. It is, too, a short Epistle ; but, notwithstanding, contains some very precise intimations of Paul's views of the relation of the *Lord Jesus Christ* to his *God* and *Father*. The other three Epistles are to individuals, and contain several directions to them as to their choice of Ministers, and as to the doctrine they are to teach. When we read these Epistles, at the present times, it naturally occurs to us to reflect how fortunate young candidates for the Ministry are in having spiritual guides, who, by a few precise overtures, can furnish much more minute instruction than the Apostle Paul was able to do ; and how fortunate it was for that Apostle, that there was no theological committee to call him to account for such expressions as would now endanger a man's continuance in the Ministry of the Gospel. He was happy in living when he could safely write that " there was one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for *all*, to be testified in due time ;" which is a confession of faith that would certainly have brought down severe censures from those who have laboured to purge the Synod of such heretical notions. His chance of being allowed to remain in the service of his Lord and master, would have been rendered much worse by his stating that " the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned, from which some having swerved have turned aside into vain jangling ; desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm," and enumerating as things contrary to sound doctrine, " being lawless and disobedient, *ungodly and sinners, unholy and profane, murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, manslayers, whoremongers—defiling themselves with mankind—being men-stealers, liars and perjured persons*"—to the total exclusion of the doctrine of the Trinity—Original Sin, Justification by Faith alone, &c. &c.

I had intended including the important texts from the Epistle to the Hebrews in this communication, but was prevented by circumstances from accomplishing my purpose in time for the present number.

EREUNETES.

THE REV. WM. PORTER, IN REPLY TO THE
REV. JOHN BROWN.

IN "The Bible Christian" for the month of May last, the Rev. John Brown, of Aghadowey, was charged with having expressed himself to the following effect, in a controversial sermon preached upwards of two years ago, in the meeting-house of Drumachose:—"My friends, I know you have been lately told by a Clergyman in this neighbourhood, (who has been delivering lectures against our blessed Saviour,) that the text of the three Heavenly Witnesses, in one of John's Epistles, is a spurious interpolation, and that it has been rejected as such by the learned Griesbach. But, my friends, what will you think of a system which can be supported only by falsehood; and what will you think of the *man who is capable of thus supporting it*, when I assure you, as I now do, that Griesbach retains the text as genuine!"—See *Bible Christian*, No. 4, page 192.

The foregoing charge, which was grounded on the testimony of some individuals who heard the sermon delivered, Mr. Brown has thought proper to deny. He denies having assured his auditors that the disputed text relative to the three Heavenly Witnesses is retained as genuine by Griesbach, in his celebrated edition of the Greek Testament; and he denies having made any allusion to me, as a person capable of supporting an erroneous system of belief, by the assertion of a falsehood. These are the points at issue between Mr. Brown and myself, and I request that they may be kept in recollection. Nothing can surpass the "noble bearing" with which that gentleman has thrown himself into the arena. "*Although*" says my Rev. opponent "*this vile accusation has rankled within Mr. Porter's breast for years, and though he chose a time when he hoped to strike with effect, and though, as the rehearsal* of his witnesses has been so long continued, their performance may be expected to be exquisite, yet I fearlessly dare him to the proof, and say, bring forth my accusers. I shall stand, not as I have been commanded, with my life, but with my Manuscript in my hand; the testimony that has been arranged to crush me, I shall drive back to the dark regions where it has been slumbering for years.*" "*I challenge my accuser to bring forth his witnesses after their protracted rehearsal. I have no means of preventing the appearance of improper witnesses, but whosoever they are, their testimony will be subjected to the ordinary tests of evidence, and I fear not, by a little cross-examination, to make an equal display of their ignorance of the subject, and the falsehood of the accusation.*"

A literal quotation of Mr. Brown's words would swell this article to an enormous size. The substance of his defence I shall endeavour to state faithfully.

* How Mr. Brown came to the knowledge of those secret "*rehearsals*," he has not condescended to explain.

He says that his whole discourse was written out with care, and accurately committed to memory, and that the Manuscript, which has undergone no change from the period of delivery, was then lying open before him. He transcribes from it a long extract, which, if such evidence were conclusive, would effectually exonerate him from the charge of having misrepresented Griesbach.

That he used in his sermon expressions similar to those which are supposed to cast an imputation on me, as an individual, he has not ventured to deny. He admits that in delivering one part of his discourse, "*he waved his hand in triumph, and said, with heartfelt emotion, 'what should be thought of the cause which required, and of the men who employed, such advocacy.'*" He asserts, however, that the foregoing words had no personal reference to me; that his hand was waved in triumph, not over *my* head, but over that of a certain periodical publication; and that all the heartfelt emotion which he so glowingly depicts, was kindled within him, not by any act of moral turpitude, but by the errors into which some anonymous writer had fallen, respecting the true import of certain disputed texts in Scripture. (*See Orthodox Presbyterian, page 322.*)

Mr. Brown tells us, that, for the purpose of guarding against the possibility of mistakes in the delivery of his sermon, he had before him in the pulpit, very copious notes of the original manuscript;—that these notes are still in existence;—that they perfectly coincide with the Discourse as written at full length;—and to these two documents he refers, as proofs that he neither misrepresented Griesbach, nor cast any reflection on Mr. Porter.

Such evidence as the foregoing, if unrebuted by positive testimony, might be deemed decisive, could it be shown that manuscripts have never been manufactured anew, in order to serve a particular purpose; and also, that preachers never take an excursive flight, but always confine themselves to the strict letter of their written discourses. Mr. Brown is known to be zealous in the cause of Orthodoxy, and, on the occasion in question, he seems to have been hurried by zeal beyond the limits of his parchment, and the limits of propriety. These remarks may be thought uncharitable; but let the reader wait for a little.

"*I knew,*" says Mr. Brown, (page 320,) "*that Mr. Porter's family were present; that the persons who had brought him silver honours were present; and that those who had enjoyed the fascinations of his society were present. And few will suppose it possible, that in such circumstances, I should have discovered so little tact as to assail an absent favourite of the people I was addressing, when my duty confined me to assail his opinions;*

"*Surley a man guided by reason, and not blinded by passion, could not have advanced such rash and unfounded assertions.*"

All this I grant: most readily do I concede, that, at first view of the case, few would suppose it possible that any man guided by reason, should discover so little tact as Mr. Brown is alleged to have discovered. All will admit that the individual must have been blinded by passion, who, circumstanced as Mr. Brown was, could make the assertions imputed to that Gentleman. But it remains to be

proved that Mr. B. is a person possessed of tact ; is a person always under the guidance of reason, and never blinded by passion. Without adverting to a ridiculous and much talked-of adventure, in which, through a total *destitution* of tact, he is known to have been involved, during his mission to the South of Ireland ;—I shall exemplify the reckless temerity of his character, by reference to a transaction which took place in the North :—Some years ago, an appeal was brought before the Synod of Ulster, by a young Student, against some proceedings of the Presbytery, to which Mr. Brown belongs.—During the debate the appellant and Mr. Brown were particularly opposed to each other. In some remarks on this subject, subsequently published, Mr. Brown affirmed, that as soon as the business came forward, the Gentleman who acted as Reporter for the Belfast News-Letter, left a pew on the left side of the Pulpit, in which he had previously sat, walked down the alley, joined the young man in a pew, on the right side of the Pulpit, and prompted him, as occasion required. This statement was denied by the Reporter, and reiterated by Mr. Brown: Here is a case in point—here we have a specimen of my opponent's rashness in positively asserting what might be easily and effectually contradicted. The person of the Reporter was known to almost every Member of the Synod : his change of place was alleged to have been made under the eyes of a numerous and observant assembly ; and was it to be supposed, that, "*any man could discover so little tact ; could be so completely deserted by judgment, and blinded by passion,*" as to persist in an affirmation, which, if unfounded, might be disproved by at least 300 witnesses : yet Mr. B. did act this extraordinary part ; he published letter after letter, in support of an assertion, the erroneousness of which was palpable to a whole multitude of people, and evinced by incontrovertible testimony, so that his capabilities are not to be measured by those of ordinary men.—That few would conduct themselves in the manner charged, I admit ; that the Rev. John Brown did so—I shall prove!!

Mr. B. asks why the charge now preferred was so long kept back ? and represents it as a fabrication recently got up for a particular purpose. The delay can be easily and naturally accounted for. In less than an hour after the injurious expressions had escaped from the Reverend gentleman's mouth, they were reported to me by two members of my own family who had heard them uttered, and who came home from the Meeting-house burning with indignation at the false and foul imputation cast on their father. Happening to meet shortly afterwards with the Rev. John M'Laughlin, in whose place of worship Mr. Brown's sermon was delivered, a conversation took place, in reference to one part of which I lately submitted to Mr. M'Laughlin the following written query—

"Will you have the goodness to state whether I did or did not, long ago, complain to you of the unfounded and injurious assertions made by Mr. Brown in his controversial discourse, and declare my determination to take some opportunity of bringing that gentleman publicly to account?" This question I am authorized by Mr. M'Laughlin to answer in the affirmative. But through what medium was I to effect the meditated exposure? It was not to be

expected that the common Newspapers would open their columns for the introduction of such a subject. Even "*The Northern Whig*" has oftener than once refused to insert for me articles connected with Theological Controversy, when they have not arisen from debates previously reported in that Journal. And at the period of which I speak, there was no Monthly Publication of a liberal character generally read by the people whom I was anxious to address. Time passed on, and the intensity of my feelings on the subject gradually abated. Indeed, it would now appear that I over-rated the injurious effect of Mr. Brown's mis-statements. They seem to have been less attended to when uttered, and have, of course, done less harm than I at one time supposed. When "*THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN*" was established, I began to think of carrying my long entertained intention into practice. The disagreeable task was, however, staved off from time to time, and the possibility is, that it might have been still longer unperformed, had not my old traducer forced himself into notice, and revived indignation, by coming forward as the propagator of a calumnious tale. This is the plain truth. At all events, the malefactor, who has long been allowed to go at large, is the last person who ought to complain on account of his punishment having been delayed.

Let the points at issue be kept in mind. The charge has been already stated. For the purpose of vindicating himself from that charge, Mr. Brown has deliberately declared, that, in his controversial sermon, he did not state to his auditors, that the text relative to the three Heavenly Witnesses is retained by Griesbach. And he has farther declared, that, in that discourse, he made no allusion to Mr. Porter as a man capable of supporting an erroneous system by the mis-statement of a fact. This is the substance of the expressions which he is alleged to have used. The *ipsissima verba* my informants did not pretend to give.

When Mr. Brown's daring denial appeared in the official pamphlet of his party, it immediately occurred to me, that with people under the influence of certain prejudices, the testimony of the Orthodox Minister in whose pulpit, and in support of whose opinions, the discourse containing the imputed expressions was preached, would have more weight, than the strongest possible evidence, emanating from Unitarians. Accordingly, I called on Mr. M'Laughlin, who, in the presence of Mr. G. Alexander, signed a document, which is now lying before me, and of which the following is a copy:—

To the Rev. William Porter.

SIR,

I do distinctly remember, that the Rev. John Brown did affirm, in a Sermon preached by him in my Meeting-house, that the disputed text relative to the three Heavenly Witnesses, is retained as genuine, in Griesbach's edition of the Greek Testament.

I cannot recollect Mr. Brown's having made a personal attack on you.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

JOHN M'LAUGHLIN.

Newton-Limavady, 16th July, 1830.

I had not charged Mr. Brown with having made on me, what could be strictly termed "*a personal attack*." The amount of the latter part of the charge was, that he had *alluded* to me in a way sufficiently significant, when he spoke of a *clergyman* who had shortly before been delivering a course of lectures in the neighbourhood. And when Mr. M'Laughlin was asked, in the presence of Mr. George Alexander, whether he would take on him to assert that Mr. Brown did *not* make such *allusion*—he promptly replied that he would not. He has admitted, that "I long ago complained to him of the unfounded and injurious assertions made by Mr. Brown." Does not this admission imply, that *I considered* them as directed against my character. And Mr. M'Laughlin certainly did not say any thing which could lead me to suppose I was in error. For I do solemnly aver, that in the conversation referred to, which was held with him shortly after the sermon was preached, and while the affair was fresh in his recollection, I detailed the substance, and the whole substance of the expressions which Mr. Brown is charged with having uttered; and that Mr. M'Laughlin did then admit, without limitation or exception, that such were the expressions actually employed. In corroboration of this, I am authorized by two of the most respectable inhabitants of Newtown-Limavady, to state thus publicly,—that they *can*, and, if required, *will* bear testimony to a similar admission on the part of Mr. M'Laughlin. Far be it from me to insinuate that my respected neighbour has not honestly declared the whole truth, according to the best of his recollection, at present.—Allowance must be made for the oblivious influence of time. Be it observed, however, that the *main* charge is completely, and undeniably proved by Mr. M'Laughlin. He has convicted the "*Warder of Zion Gates*" of having deliberately asserted a falsehood; and the man who has asserted one *deliberate* falsehood, must be presumed capable of asserting another.

But I proceed to establish *both parts* of the charge, by evidence which would command belief, had Mr. M'Laughlin never opened his lips, or moved his pen on the subject. The following is a correct copy of a document, now in my possession :—

To Doctor Moore, and Messrs. M'Kissack and Millar, of Newtown-Limavady.

GENTLEMEN,

You will have the goodness to state in writing, as you have already done in conversation, your answers to the two subjoined queries.—I am, &c.

WILLIAM PORTER.

July 24th, 1830.

1st. In a controversial sermon, preached upwards of two years ago, in Mr. M'Laughlin's meeting-house, by the Rev. John Brown, did that gentleman assert, or did he not, that the disputed text relative to the three Heavenly Witnesses is retained as genuine by Griesbach?

Answer—HE DID.

WILLIAM MOORE.
JAMES M'KISSACK.
THOMAS MILLER.

2d. In the same sermon, did the same gentleman allude to Mr. Porter, though not expressly by name, as a person who had endeavoured to support the Unitarian system by affirming, contrary to fact, that the text above referred to has been rejected by Griesbach?

Answer.—HE DID.

WILLIAM MOORE.

JAMES M'KISSACK.

I am fond of referring to Orthodox authority; and, as Mr. Brown, apparently conscious that his statement would be refuted, had talked in his letter about the production of "improper witnesses," I thought it right to submit the following query to Mr. M'Laughlin:—

"SIR,—Will you have the goodness to state whether Dr. Moore, Mr. James M'Kissack, and Mr. Thomas Millar, are, or are not, persons of a respectable rank in Society? Are they, or are they not persons whose clearness of understanding makes them competent to bear testimony on such points as are now at issue between Mr. Brown and myself; and whose veracity and probity entitle their testimony to belief?"

W. PORTER."

To the foregoing question, Mr. M'Laughlin, in the presence of his brother, answered in the following words "*They are persons of unimpeached and unimpeachable characters.*" I have to apologize to the gentlemen mentioned, for having put such a query respecting them, but entertaining, as I do, a high opinion of Mr. Brown's boldness, I did not know what he might allege for the purpose of depreciating their character, and; consequently, their testimony in the estimation of people to whom they are unknown.

"When I reflect," says Mr. Brown, (page 321,) "that I went to defend the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, whose presence and guidance I invoked—had I intentionally employed falsehood in a cause so holy—my hair rises on my head and my knees tremble, and the blood runs cold to my heart, while my hand registers my belief, that the offence would have been unpardonable." Reader, has or has not this act of delinquency been proved?

Perhaps the Minister of Aghadowey is now beginning to wish that he had followed the advice of his friends, and not ventured to come forward with a denial. Bad as his situation was, it is now infinitely worse; that has happened to him, which very often happens to those who have allowed themselves to say the thing which is not true. One violation of veracity has placed him under a kind of semi-necessity of committing another. His aberrations from rectitude have brought him to open shame, and caused him to be exposed to public gaze on a platform, more elevated than honourable. In a situation so painfully conspicuous, the eyes of most men would be fixed on the ground, and their faces suffused with a burning blush. Not so the Minister of Aghadowey:

"Reckless on high stands unabashed" John Brown.

Satisfied with having established my case to the full conviction of every unprejudiced mind, it is not my wish to prosecute it any further. But should more formal investigation be insisted on, I am willing to meet it

When it is considered that the assertion respecting Griesbach was one not likely to arrest the attention of a country Congregation, and that years have elapsed since that assertion was made ; when it is considered that people in general are very reluctant to involve themselves in trouble ; and that nine out of ten persons who heard Mr. Brown would be particularly reluctant to incur popular odium, and bring discredit on their own sect, by bearing witness against an Orthodox Minister : when these circumstances are taken into account, it is a matter of surprise, that even four competent individuals should at the present day be able to recollect the expressions charged, and at the same time willing to acknowledge that recollection.— But additional evidence can be adduced. I have already stated, that Mr. Brown's words were instantly communicated to me, by two members of my own family, a daughter and a son, in whose hearing they were uttered. Both of them can bear the most solemn and decided testimony to the Preacher's misrepresentation of Griesbach, and calumnious allusion to their father ; an allusion which would naturally make a deeper, and more permanent impression on their minds, than on those of others. I did not judge it necessary to have *their* signature attached to any of the papers now published. To bring forward a female, would not be pleasant, and can hardly be necessary. But my son is ready to state what he has to state, in the form of a written and regularly attested affidavit.

Let not Mr. Brown attempt to throw dust in the eyes of the public, by producing persons who will declare that they heard his sermon delivered and have no recollection of the words imputed. The probability is, that such a declaration could be made, and made most conscientiously by at least a thousand people. Words are fugitive things—all auditors are not equally struck by the same passage of an oration, nor are all minds equally retentive of impression.— In a discourse long since preached, statements may have been made, which are distinctly remembered by one hearer, though forgotten by fifty. And therefore, if a few respectable, intelligent, and disinterested individuals declare solemnly, that Mr. Brown uttered certain things, their testimony will not be in the slightest degree shaken, should ever so many individuals equally respectable, declare that they have no recollection of his having done so. In Courts of Justice, how commonly do we hear such questions and answers as these— Do you remember having used such an expression, on such an occasion? *A.* no.—If your respectable neighbour A B should swear that you did, would you believe him? *A.* I would. Mr. Brown must produce witnesses of all work—witnesses who will *positively affirm, that he did not say what he is charged with having said* ; that he could not possibly have said it, without attracting their attention at the time ; and that if they had heard it they could not afterwards have forgotten it. Should any one be so hardy, as to make those rash and self-condemnatory assertions, no man of common sense would believe them.

Whether Mr. Brown in his Sermon spoke of me as a person who had been giving Lectures against our Blessed Saviour, or against

the Deity of our Blessed Saviour, is a matter of no consequence.—My informants did not pretend to give his exact words. This he represents in his Letter, as a very suspicious circumstance. The case would have been far more suspicious, had five or six individuals literally agreed, with respect to the identical phraseology employed. This would have indicated collusion.

Mr. Brown represents me as having said, that my assertion, with regard to Griesbach, was discredited even by my friends. This alleged disbelief he accounts for in one or other of two ways—"My friends knew me to be a man, either regardless of truth, or of a temperament so sanguine as to overleap all bounds, in order to arrive at a favourite conclusion." A distinction without a difference. The learned gentleman has declared that "my candour" in stating certain things, "has excited his pity." That candour should be viewed by him with contemptuous compassion, will be readily believed, when the words which I really used are compared with those which he has put into my mouth. "Several of my own hearers, who knew me to be INCAPABLE OF INTENTIONAL FALSIFICATION, supposed that through a lapse of recollection, I must have confounded Griesbach's rejection of one text, with his rejection of another. And it was not, &c. &c. &c. . . . it was not till I had done all these things, that even my friends were satisfied with the TRUTH of what I had stated," (correctness would have been a word more expressive of what was evidently my meaning.)—"They could hardly bring themselves to believe that any Minister of the Gospel . . . would be capable of acting as Mr. Brown had deliberately done." It is here distinctly stated, that my friends and hearers knew me to be incapable of intentional falsification, but were willing to suppose that I had involuntarily made a mistake, rather than admit the idea that "a Warder of Zion," a member of the Synod's Committee for the revival of religious purity, had uttered a defamatory falsehood while the book of God was lying open before him. And this plain statement is disingenuously twisted into an admission that my veracity is held in low estimation by those who know me. Mr. Brown has interpreted this part of my letter, as he and his brethren are in the habit of interpreting Scripture. He has seized on a single word, which he construes in a sense, different from the one evidently intended, and in direct opposition to the whole context. "How was it," asks my opponent, "that the voice of a stranger had such a charm as to destroy all confidence in a man intimately known?" This extraordinary preference on the part of my own people, he attributes to their knowledge of my character, but he modestly refrains from *saying* what is evidently *implied*, that it was in some degree to be ascribed to their knowledge of his. Let me tell him, that the WORD of the Minister of Newtownlismavady would be credited by his hearers, in preference to the OATH of the Minister of Aghadowey.

Mr. Brown proceeds—"But I shall fix the second charge indelibly on Mr. Porter, by his own testimony. He has asserted that the testimonial which he received had no connexion with religious opinions. And this after the explosion at Strabane!! And this after his controversial Sermons!! And this after the judgment pronounced in the address, and embodied in the inscription!!! That some of the parties concerned in the testimonial may not have acted from any approval of Mr. Porter's religious principles, I admit; but that with all the parties concerned, it had no connexion with religious opinions, is too great a demand upon our credulity. Really a man who deliberately writes, and publishes a glaring violation of truth, cannot expect to be believed even by his friends." In the same page he represents me as "a man lost to all shame." Mr. Brown refers to the *address* and the *inscription* as furnishing a *refutation* of my assertion. I refer to both documents,

and also to my answer to them, as affording ample confirmation of that assertion. In the address the subscribers are pleased to say—"Though some of us entertain sentiments different from yours, on certain doctrines about which the wisest and best men have not been able to agree, yet we all perfectly concur in expressing our warm approbation of the impressive manner in which you have uniformly inculcated, both by precept and example, the practical duties of Christianity." As Mr. Brown has arraigned my character, I trust I shall be excused for quoting the following sentence—"We recognize in you, Sir, an indulgent parent, an affectionate husband, a kind master, and a sincere friend—with a morality unspotted, a candour, and adherence to truth unsurpassed."

On the respectability of the names attached to this address, even Mr. Brown has not dared to breathe a suspicion. The following is a copy of the Inscription to which my adversary has referred—"To the Rev. William Porter, by his Protestant Friends, of different denominations, in Newtownlimavady, and its vicinity, as a mark of their esteem for his many amiable qualities in private life, and their cordial approbation of his fearless and disinterested assertion of the invaluable right of private judgment." In my reply, the following sentence may be found—"During the course of last Summer, there was a time, I confess, when my spirit was nearly subdued; and when I thought I should be borne down by obloquy, merely for having expressed opinions which, however erroneous they may be deemed, can have emanated from no other source, than conscientious conviction. But that time is past. I have found that there are liberal men of EVERY CHURCH, AND OF EVERY CREED, who will not allow an individual whose intentions are upright, to be run down by vulgar clamour." All these things were published in the Newspapers of the time: and yet Mr. Brown has termed me a "*violator of truth*," because I happened to say that the transaction in question had no reference to my theological opinions.—In all cases of this kind, the grounds on which the compliment is conferred, are explicitly declared; and, in the case alluded to, disputed points of doctrine are in terms the most express, thrown entirely aside.

Mr. Brown affirms (page 323) that what he said in his sermon, about "the savage Indian, leaping on his unguarded foe, and stabbing him to the heart," had reference, not to me, but to a certain monthly publication. If so, it must be allowed, that the figure employed by the learned preacher was exceedingly natural and appropriate. Methinks I see a blue pamphlet, "bounding with tiger fury from its hiding place, felling its defenceless foe, at one stroke, to the earth—then brandishing in triumph the blood-stained tomahawk, and gazing with joy on the quivering limbs of its victim." No wonder that this characteristic description of a twelpenny Magazine "made a deep impression on the assembly, and that the countenances of certain persons presented to the preacher's mind an emblem of Belshazzar's dismay when he saw the handwriting on the wall."!!!

Mr. Brown represents me as attempting to persuade men that religious discussion amounts to persecution. Let him either produce the passage in which I have done so, or add another item to the list of his deviations from truth. I complained of such calumnious misrepresentations as those of which the Reverend Gentleman himself has now been proved guilty, but never did I utter a syllable of complaint against fair reasoning.

One other quotation, and this long letter shall be concluded. "I do rejoice that Mr. Porter's system when unmasked frightened away the people" . . . "it is gratifying to know that the people removed themselves from his unscriptural system, and it is instructive to reflect that all this was achieved by a few inexperienced young men," (of whom the Rev. James Elder was one,) "who, hurling against his castle of fictions a few pebbles gathered from the stream of Revelation,

have laid it and its Goliath-warrior prostrate in the dust," "this man of genius (i. e. Mr. Porter) has philosophised his congregation to the shadow of a shade." Reader, hear a few simple facts. At the commencement of my Ministry in Newtownlimavady, there was not, so far as I know, or have ever been able to learn, a single Unitarian in the whole congregation. At the present moment its members are Unitarians nearly to a man. That several defections have, from time to time, taken place, is no doubt the fact. Mr. Brown's PITY may be a second time excited when he learns that those defections have been occasioned by my adherence to principle. Does the learned gentleman forget that "many weak-minded disciples" even of our Saviour "went back" at a certain time "and walked no more with him." It is a fact, however, which I cannot refrain from stating, that of the individuals who have gone over to Orthodox Congregations, only one or at most two could be prevailed on to attend the series of Controversial Discourses which I deemed it my duty to deliver. From some of those individuals I have in my possession letters avowing a determination not to hear lest they should be convinced. The verdict of such persons will pass for just as much as it is worth. It is well known that, in various instances, religious feelings were only the *ostensible*, whilst political feelings were the *real* cause of secession—Orangeism and Brunswickism were at the bottom of the business. That those secessions were comparatively so few, is matter of surprise, when the means adopted for effecting them are taken into account. Anonymous writings were circulated. Persons likely to be wrought on were closeted and tampered with. The humblest members of our congregation were visited in their cabins, stopped on the highway, and followed to flax-mills and corn-mills by benedicted Divines—Clergymen and Laymen of every religious denomination—Members of the Synod of Ulster—Churchmen and Catholics—Seceders—Covenanters and Methodist—all were active in trying to make inroads on our insulated flock. And, after all, what has been the result? I do affirm, that for every individual who has seceded from us, ten individuals belonging to Orthodox congregations have declared themselves convinced that Unitarianism is the doctrine of the Gospel. That only a few of those persons have actually come over to us, can easily be accounted for. Congregational connexions, it is an embarrassing thing to break;—the religious prejudices of near relatives, it is a painful thing to shock;—the current of popular opinion, it is an arduous thing directly to oppose. Still, however, a spirit of inquiry has been excited. Our principles are gaining ground, and Mr. Brown will be gratified to learn, that the number of our sacramental communicants has, during the last three years, been gradually progressive. At the last celebration of the Supper, it was our pleasing duty to address four tables. It must at the same time be acknowledged, that Unitarianism is only beginning to take root in this corner of the vineyard. He, by whose instrumentality it has been planted, will not live to see it flourish *here*, as it is flourishing in other places. It has been his lot to bear the heat and burden of the day. Even in his sequestered walk of life he has not been completely sheltered from annoyance. Some vulgar obloquy he has had to encounter;—some petty molestations he has had to meet with;—some unpleasant feelings he has had to endure. These things, however, are rapidly passing away, and he trusts that when his head shall be laid in the dust, the truth of those principles, which he has been trying to disseminate, will be generally acknowledged. He trusts that the grain of mustard seed which he has committed to the ground, will be reared and watered by more skilful husbandmen than he, and, in that case, he has no doubt but it will take root, and flourish, and spread, until it cover the whole adjoining district.

Some remarks upon Mr. Brown's authority for the Genevese Story, shall be forwarded in due time.

WILLIAM PORTER.

OBSERVATIONS BY A UNITARIAN.

THE extensive dissemination in the South of Ireland, of your valuable little work, "The Bible Christian," induces me to offer, through its medium, a few remarks to the friends of Unitarianism in that quarter. It is deeply to be regretted, that the cause there should suffer by the temporising spirit of *some* of its adherents. They shrink from the word *Unitarian* as from something very perilous, and do not deem it *expedient* openly to avow their belief; and hence it is, that our opinions are so often misrepresented and vilified. To us indeed it is a "very small matter to be judged of man's judgment;" but we deem truth of too much importance not to let its light so shine before us, as to glorify our Heavenly Father.

Theological controversy is in general subversive of true piety; for, alas! how often are the very worst feelings engaged in its cause, and the struggle is too often for *victory* and not for *Truth*: but in these controversial times, when our self-named Orthodox brethren are so active and zealous in disseminating their creeds and tenets, I look on silence and inactivity as highly injurious and criminal, and may be considered as evincing want of confidence in the truth of our cause, or of inability to defend it.

We are taunted with the paucity of our numbers—we are told that our religion is cold and cheerless, producing supineness and inactivity; nay, we are even accused of infidelity! and that our faith is the offspring of fancy, having no foundation in Scripture. These charges are hard to bear, and it is due to ourselves and the cause of truth to refute them. Let us court public discussion and free inquiry. Let us publish to the world the exalted views which the *dreaded Unitarian* has of the Divine character and perfections. I would call on our men of talent to come forward and aid and assist in promulgating the sublime doctrines which we believe. Let them bring to the task their concentrated power of intellect, zeal, and affection for the cause, and mental and moral courage to give firm testimony to their power, and, with Divine blessing, it must prosper. Oh! let not the pure

and holy religion we profess, be less zealously supported than the gloomy, mystical, and degrading scheme of Calvin! It will at this time particularly suffer, if, when vigour, intellect, activity, and zeal are exerted in the cause of every other sect, our Ministers should be devoid of this heart-stirring energy. Would that I could see them increasing in religious warmth and sensibility, I would exert my feeble voice to rouse them from their apathy. I would urge them to cast off their slavish dread of man's censure; to adopt and glory in the name of Unitarian; and by their earnestness in the cause of truth and virtue, give to the name a brighter lustre.

For the promotion of more kindly feelings towards us on the part of our Orthodox brethren, and the wider diffusion of our opinions, I know of no plan more calculated to attain that end, than an occasional course of public lectures, delivered by different Unitarian Ministers, invited for that purpose. As the arrangement of this plan must be determined by local circumstances, I shall not enlarge on it at present. And here, I would call most earnestly on all who are friends to Unitarian Christianity, to join and co-operate for this purpose. Singly we are weak—united we shall be strong: and I am firmly convinced, that more union would be produced amongst the discordant portions of the religious world by free discussion and inquiry, than the timid mediators, who would be all things to all men, will ever be able to effect. Minor shades of difference must ever prevail, in interpreting the Sacred Word. It hath been so ordered, for wise and good purposes; but we may hope for unity of spirit, though not of faith. Virtue and goodness are not the exclusive property of any party, nor is the exuberant beneficence of our Heavenly Father confined to class or clime; and while we labour to inculcate, and strenuously contend for that *purity of doctrine* which came unsullied from the lips of Jesus, let us, at the same time, assert our belief, that *purity of practice* is much more acceptable in the sight of God. That I am most anxious for the diffusion of Unitarian principles, I will not deny; for I look on its system as refining and spiritualizing the mind more than any other form of Christianity; but in advocating its cause, I trust that I am free from all party zeal or sectarian prejudices. I would desire none to embrace it if it did not bring with it greater devotion of the heart to God.

These remarks are respectfully addressed to all friends of free enquiry and pure Christianity. If they awaken any interest, or excite greater exertion in the cause of Truth, I shall be nobly recompensed.

A UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN.

Communications from the "Unitarian Christian" are solicited, and shall be attended to.—EDITORS.

Intelligence.

PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD OF MUNSTER.

The annual meeting of this respectable Body took place in Cork on the 7th ultimo, in the Presbyterian Church of Prince's street. An interval of ten years had elapsed since the Synod was convened in that city. So many extraordinary events had occurred, during that interval, in the history of Irish Presbyterians, that an unusual degree of interest in the proceedings of the meeting was excited in Cork. The sessions of the Synod were, in consequence, attended throughout by a numerous and most respectable auditory.

The Rev. Edward King, of Bandon, was chosen Moderator. Divine service was introduced, according to the practice of the Synod, with prayer and reading of Scripture, by the Rev. M. Dickie, an ordained Minister of the Presbytery of Paisley, in Scotland, and called from thence, last year, to the co-pastoral charge of the congregation of Limerick. The sermon was preached by the Rev. James Martineau, formerly of Norwich, and recently settled as a co-pastor in the congregation of Eustace-street, Dublin. His text was Luke xii. 51. "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you nay; but rather, division." In the course of his sermon, the Rev. Preacher dwelt, in forcible and eloquent terms, on the responsibility of all Christian Ministers; and pointed out, in a very awakening manner, the awful criminality of those who act ambiguously and equivocally in the sacred concerns of religion, tampering with their own sincerity, yielding their convictions of the truth to the prejudices of their hearers, and surrendering their christian liberty to the fears, the fashions, or the interests of the world. The sermon made a deep

impression, and, at the unanimous request of the Synod and members of the Cork congregation, Mr. Martineau has consented to its publication.

The Rev. Mr. Taylor, of Rivington, in Lancashire, and the Rev. Mr. Poole, of Lismore, (a member of the Synod of Ulster,) being present, were invited to sit with the Synod.

The Rev. Joseph M^cAlister, a licentiate of the Presbytery of Templepatrick, was received under the care of the Synod of Munster. His credentials were attested by the Rev. Mr. Glendy, and the Rev. Mr. Campbell, Moderator and Clerk of that Presbytery.

Mr. John Palmer, of Waterford, a graduate of Dublin University, and educated with a view to the ministry in the established Church, having been led in the course of his theological studies to embrace the principles of the Synod of Munster, viz. "the recognition of the Holy Scriptures as the only infallible rule of faith and duty, and the rejection of the authority of all human tests and confessions of faith;" and having been for some time under the direction of the Synod as a candidate for the Ministry, was publicly examined by the Ministers, in Greek Testament, Hebrew Bible, Moral Philosophy, Church History, Christian Evidences, and an extensive course of Divinity. He also delivered a discourse on a prescribed subject, John, viii. 12. "I am the light of the world." In all of which he gave great satisfaction. He was then licensed as a preacher of the Gospel, and admitted as a probationer under the care of the Synod of Munster. On which occasion an affecting and impressive prayer was offered up by the Rev. Mr. Hort, Senior Minister of Cork.

A memorial was laid before the Synod by a commissioner from a worshipping Society recently formed at Enniscorthy, praying to be connected with the Synod of Munster, from a "conviction that the rules of the Synod are agreeable to, and founded on, the word of God." To this memorial were attached 274 signatures. A similar memorial was presented from a Worshipping Society lately formed at Camolin, in the County of Wexford; to which were attached 103 signatures. The Synod unanimously agreed to foster these Congregations, and adopted measures to that effect.

An address to his Majesty, King William the Fourth, on his accession to the throne, was unanimously agreed to.

The reports from the several Congregations in connexion with the Synod, were exceedingly satisfactory. Their respective Charitable Institutions, Congregational Libraries, Sunday Schools, and Lectureships, were found to be in a flourishing state, and affording the prospect of great and increasing utility. In the report of Fethard it appeared that the Congregation has petitioned Parliament against Presbyterians being compelled to serve as Church Wardens, and thereby to give the personal attendance at worship in a church from which they conscientiously dissent. A very gratifying letter on this subject, from Sir John Newport to the Fethard Congregation, was communicated to the Synod.

During their stay in Cork, the Ministers and Elders of the Synod were entertained at dinner by the Members of the Prince's-street Congregation. Michael Creagh, Esq. (late High Sheriff of the County,) in the Chair. The liberal and truly christian sentiments expressed by the Chairman, and by the different Ministers and lay-gentlemen who addressed the meeting, were highly honourable to the Synod and gratifying to every person present. In the evening the Synod was invited to tea by the Ladies of the Congregation.

It is truly delightful to observe the meeting of an Ecclesiastical Body, composed of members holding various religious sentiments, not only undisturbed with a single note of discord, but characterized by the utmost harmony, and the exhibition of the most kindly feelings of brotherly love. When men thus agree to differ, and respect the conscientious convictions of each other, appealing to the word of God alone as the fountain of religious truth, they practice mutual forbearance under a sense of their common fallibility. They act under the influence of a Christian spirit, which, wherever it is found, whether amongst Catholics or Protestants, Calvinists or Arians, Athanasians or Unitarians, proves the presence of genuine Christianity. On the contrary, wherever this spirit is wanting, Christianity is absent, no matter how correct may be the belief, or how well founded the speculative opinions.

GENERAL SYNOD OF ULSTER.

This Reverend Body met at Omagh, on 29th June last, and proceeded to business with all becoming gravity. "Expectation was on tip-toe," and great was the sensation excited in that remote district, at the prospect of beholding the venerable fathers of Orthodoxy, assembled in sacred conclave, to deliberate for the good of *their* Church. The house was crowded on the first day, and, on the second day, the attendance was also large; but it afterwards regularly dwindled away to a shadow; and, before the termination of the meeting, the speakers were nearly left without an audience. Never did the learned body make so dull an exhibition, nor did auditors and spectators ever before find the assembly so "weary, flat, stale, and unprofitable." The boast, indeed, in the last No. of "The Orthodox Presbyterian," that the meeting was calm and tranquil, and full of the "most pleasing harmony," owing, as they state, to the separation of the Remonstrants. Yes, there was the calmness of despotism—the peace of profound submission—the spiritless acquiescence and gloomy tranquillity of an eastern palace. This may continue for a few years, though, we should think, very few indeed—but there is a redeeming spirit abroad, and the human mind cannot now, in this country, be long enslaved, but, free and disenthralled, will it yet go forth in its native majesty, boldly claiming and fearlessly maintaining its inalienable rights and privileges. Harmony, no doubt, is a very desirable thing, but it is possible to prize it too highly; and perhaps it was owing to this conception of its *harmonious* importance at *present*, that the late proceedings at Greyabbey, Templepatrick, Narrowater, &c, were altogether overlooked, or at best but glanced at. Not a word condemnatory of those Ministers, who excited and fomented feelings of animosity in peaceful congregations, until they burst forth in acts of the most disgraceful outrage. Not the slightest blame imputed to members of their Body, for instigating Magistrates, by artful and hypocritical letters, to exercise their "petty brief authority" in the most arbitrary and tyrannical manner. We affirm, that the General Synod of Ulster has identified itself, at its last meeting, with those flagrant enor-

mities, by its silence on the subject, and years of "harmony" will not be sufficient to wipe away the stain such proceedings have left on its character. Connected with this subject, we have to state that the author of an article in our present Number, signed "A Remonstrant," has received, since writing that article, more authentic information respecting some congregations under the care of the Remonstrant Synod, particularly Ballycarry, Carncastle and Glenarm. In Ballycarry we understand that more than one fourth of the persons whose names were enrolled on the stipend list, previous to their separation from the Synod, still adhere to that Body; but the statements published in the Newspapers of the day are calculated to convey a gross misrepresentation of the real state of that congregation. Previous to the division, the number of names on the stipend list was 317, which was the greatest number ever enrolled during Mr. Glendy's ministry; at present the names subscribed to the stipend list of the Remonstrant congregation are 285.

CARNCastle.—It is *not fact*, that 90 families adhere to the Synod, and only 30 to Mr. Alexander, as was stated in a memorial to the General Synod, presented at its last meeting. Of the persons who really contributed to the support of the house, there never were more than 120 families, and of these upwards of 80 still remain and form the Remonstrant Congregation. With regard to Glenarm we have not had an opportunity of ascertaining the precise state of the members, but we are authorized by a person, on whose knowledge and accuracy we can rely, to say, that the statements made respecting that congregation are equally false and unfounded, with others made at Omagh and elsewhere.

ARMAGH CONGREGATION.

The following Remonstrance, signed by all the Committee and the great majority of the Elders of the Presbyterian Congregation of Armagh, was presented at the late meeting of the General Synod; but, owing to some want of formality, it was, like some other matters, slurred over, and finally rejected by that Body. Knowing, as we do, the high respectability, intelligence, and moral worth of the gentlemen by whom it is signed, we are proud that they have expressed themselves so candidly and firmly. The Remonstrants have many friends in every respectable congregation, and must be gratified by the example now given by the Session and Committee of that

of Armagh We do wonder, had these Gentlemen sent forward a memorial in approbation of the Test and Overtures of the Synod, and expressive of their gratification at its proceedings, whether such a document would have been rejected, under the pretext that no commissioners had attended? EDITORS.

To the Ministers and Elders who compose the Synod of Ulster, at Omagh, on Tuesday, the 29th June, 1830.

WE, the undersigned, Members of the Session and Committee of the Presbyterian Congregation of Armagh, firmly attached to the Presbyterian Church, and *formerly connected with your Body*, take the opportunity of your meeting together, to lay before you our sentiments with respect to the situation of that Church, and the conduct of its Ministers. We have, on a former occasion, made known our sentiments, and our dissent from the Overtures passed in 1828. We are still of the same opinion respecting them, and declare that they are derogatory to the true and genuine principles of Presbyterianism, and not inferior in their oppressive tendency to the Canons of other Churches of which you complain. We are directed by our Divine Master to *search the Scriptures*; but if the liberty of *judging* of them is to be taken from us by our Clergy, and their own creeds to be substituted in their room, we consider Presbyterianism equally in trammels, and under the dominion of the Clergy as the religion of any other Church. From these principles we dissent, and in this we are not alone: for we are joined by most of the enlightened Presbyterians throughout Ireland. This will soon occasion a defalcation, both in your members and your means of support, as a large and respectable body of your hearers will turn away from you in disgust, in consequence of the measures which you have adopted. Take example by us in our own congregation; although we, in some degree, differ in our religious opinions from our very respectable Minister, yet we live together in unity. He does not interfere with our opinions, and we can listen to him on the essentials of religion and the duties of life, with pleasure. We sit down together at the Communion Table like brethren, and in the spirit in which that ordinance was instituted. We have made our Meeting-house comfortable, and our Congregation and Minister are respectable and respected. Could you not encourage the same spirit in the Synod? Formerly its meeting was hailed with pleasure: now it is become a scene of malice, ill-will, and every kind of bitter speaking. In short, we are made, by the conduct of the Synod, a "by-word" among the people; and that great preponderance of independence, which emanated from Presbyterianism, is now taken away from the rising generation by the weakness and the fault of its Ministers. Greyabbey, Ballycarry, and Warrenpoint, call on you to make enquiry respecting those Presbyteries and Ministers, who have occasioned such disturbances to the peaceable worshippers of those Congregations; and we would call on the Elders at Synod, not to be carried away from their duty, but to support the liberty, and respectability, and independence of their Church, before it be en-

tirely annihilated. Finally, we would recommend to Ministers and Elders, to lay aside all differences of opinion on those points of Doctrine which cannot be fully illustrated here, and to join together in preserving the true principles of the Presbyterian Church.

Rescind your Overtures, and become again the Synod of Ulster. Until that period, we never can become Members of the Body.—We remain, respectfully, your obedient servants,

ELDERS.

Alexander Prentice,
Hugh Kidd,
William M'Williams,
Joseph Oliver,
Leonard Dobbin,
James Magill,
Benjamin Oliver,
Robert M'Bride,
William Jamison.

MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE.

Wm. Carroll,
John Barnes,
Thomas Kidd,
John Kane,
James Baxter,
Thomas Bell,
Wm. Dobbin,
Wm. Boyd,
John Gray,
Andrew Maziere,
John Mackey,
William Barnes.

Armagh, 28th June, 1830.

SYNODICAL COMPARISONS.

"The Orthodox Presbyterian" for June, page 289, has made a strange "statistical" survey of the Remonstrant Congregations of Ulster, which is calculated to mislead the public, as to the number of their *seatholders*, their *stipend*, and their *respectability*. There is a propensity in some men, arising from vanity or malice, to elevate themselves above their real level, and to sink others below their proper height. What feeling has prompted "The Orthodox Presbyterian" to measure the Remonstrants by a false standard, I cannot say, but, certain it is, he has measured them by a rule of his own invention. He seems desirous of obtaining "the real muster roll of their respective adherents," which is very well, had he suspended his insinuations, miscalculations, and conclusions, until he had been furnished with better evidence. Though comparisons are sometimes odious, and frequently useless, yet "The Orthodox Presbyterian" has rendered them in some measure necessary; and I shall now proceed to furnish him with "the real muster roll" of the Remonstrant Congregations, by comparing the number of their *seatholders*, their annual *stipend*, and their recognized *respectability*, with an equal number of *reputed Orthodox Congregations*. I shall compare *first class* Congregations with *first*, *second* with *second*, and *third* with *third*; leaving, not "The Orthodox Presbyterian," but the public to judge of my fairness. And, that I do not dread even an advantage, I will give *two* Orthodox Congregations in every comparison, from which "The Orthodox Presbyterian" may select either *one* or the *other*, as he pleases. But before I proceed, I wish it to be distinctly understood, that I mean nothing disrespectful towards the Societies connected with the General Synod, which I shall name—not for the sake of

triumph but truth: They are all highly respectable; but if, when weighed in the balance of comparison, they be found wanting in any or all the particulars, let them blame their pretended friend, "The Orthodox Presbyterian," who has compelled the beam of justice to be held forth to the public eye.

FIRST CLASS CONGREGATIONS.

<i>Remonstrant Synod.</i>		<i>General Synod.</i>
Newry is equal, in <i>seatholders, stipend,</i> and <i>respectability,</i>		to Armagh, or Mary's Abbey, Dublin.
Banbridge	to	Donaghmore or Clare.
Dromore	to	Portaferry or Randalstown.
Moneyrea	to	Ballyronney or Donegore.
Ballycarry	to	Burt or Killead.

SECOND CLASS CONGREGATIONS.

Nowtownlimavady	to	Benburb or 4th Belfast.
Kilmore	to	Maghera or Magherally.
Ballee	to	Kirkcubbin or Tobermore.
Templepatrick	to	Donaghedy or Ballynure.
Crumlin	to	Glastry or Carlan.
Carncastle	to	Ballywalter or Carlow.

THIRD CLASS CONGREGATIONS.

Dunmurry	to	Dunean or Usher's Quay, Dub.
Moira	to	Cootehill or Drumbanagher.
Carlingford	to	Ray or Ballinderry.
Narrow-water	to	Monreagh or Glentubret.
Greyabbey	to	Islandmagee or Loughgall.
Glenarm	to	Ballyrashane or Cavanaleck.

Let those who are skilled in Presbyterian "Statistics," and who are continually counting *men* and *money* at every remove, now make the comparison, choosing seventeen out of the thirty-four Orthodox Congregations, which have been selected in *each particular case from different Counties*, and I am bold to assert, that some of the Remonstrant Congregations, taken *singly*, will surpass those in the *same class* of the General Synod, in *seatholders, stipend,* and acknowledged *respectability*.—Take seventeen on each side *collectively*; and the same result will follow. I know there are more numerous Congregations in connexion with the General Synod, than any in connexion with the Remonstrant Synod; but still the Remonstrants have Congregations, in each class, superior to Congregations in the same class in the General Synod. I do not intend to make any comparison in *classical learning, general acquirements,* and *moral worth*, between the seventeen Ministers which "The Orthodox Presbyterian" may select from the thirty-six

on his side of the question, and by which he has a double advantage, and the seventeen slandered Remonstrants, but I invite examination in every respect, and must, for the present, esteeming, as I do, all the Ministers of all the congregations referred to, repel, with indignation, the foul calumnies of "The Orthodox Presbyterian."

A BIBLE PROTESTANT.

We know that some of the Remonstrant Congregations have increased during the Ministry of their present pastors, are now more numerous than when the augmentation of Royal Bounty took place, and pay, with the utmost punctuality, a higher stipend than they ever did since they had a name. We are authorized to give a direct contradiction, to the statements made at the late meeting of the General Synod at Omagh, as reported in the Newspapers of the day, respecting the comparative numbers of the Remonstrants in Ballycarry and Carncastle. Those ancient congregations, which existed before the General Synod had a name or an Overture, a Westminster Confession or Westminster Test, were far under-rated, as were others in which any division has taken place. Mr. Alexander, of Crumlin, has very properly corrected, through the public prints, the spurious arithmetic of "The Orthodox Presbyterian" in the case of his congregation.

EDITORS.

Correspondents.

We have received a very *modest* request from the Rev. John Brown, the purport of which is, that we should, six weeks after its first appearance in another periodical, insert his reply to the Rev. Mr. Porter, whose article never appeared in that other publication. The bare statement of the request is a sufficient answer to any reasonable man.

We have thought it necessary, under all the circumstances, to print the whole of Mr. Porter's long reply to Mr. Brown; but we have done so in contemplation of its being the last.

MNASON'S query has just come to hand.

The anniversary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, at which just tribute was paid to the Remonstrant Ministers of Ulster, for their zeal and perseverance, shall be attended to in our next.

ALPHA'S remarks on the abuse of Scripture quotations, as made in the last number of the "Orthodox Presbyterian," came too late for insertion.

THE
Bible Christian.

No. VIII.

SEPTEMBER, 1830.

VOL. I.

A REVIEW OF SOME MODERN SYNODS.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 311.

IRISH CONVOCATION.

DURING the earlier ages of Christianity, the government of Ireland was a pentarchy, under four provincial kings, and a monarch, to whom Meath was allotted as his demesne or territory. The Irish Church also consisted of four provinces; and the Archbishop of Armagh, as successor to St. Patrick, was their Primate. The Bishop of Meath still takes precedence of his brethren, with the title of Most Reverend. But the kings were united by a very slender tie, which was frequently broken; and the Archbishops were often at variance. They were in the habit of holding Provincial Synods, and there were instances of National Councils. These, however, bore no resemblance to our Convocations. In the eighth and ninth centuries, the Danes overran the country, and Turges established himself at Armagh, as king of Ireland: on the expulsion of the Danes, a remnant of them kept possession of the maritime cities, and acknowledged the Archbishop of Canterbury for their Primate, having received their christianity from the English. These formed another independent power, both civil and ecclesiastical. So many conflicting establishments forbid us to expect any consistent system of ecclesiastical polity; especially, as the Irish Prelates acknowledged no subjection to the Pope. This was not effected till 1152, when Cardinal Paparon invested the four Archbishops with palls, brought from Rome. This, however, was so far from producing concord, that it excited a spirit of independence and rivalry; and immediately after, a contest, concerning the Primacy, commenced between Armagh and Dublin, which continued for centuries, as between Canterbury and York, in England.

In 1182, the Pope granted an exempt jurisdiction to the Archbishop of Dublin: in 1261, the contest was decided in favour of Armagh; and yet in 1337, the Primate was prevented from attending Parliament, by the Archbishop of Dublin, who would not allow him to have his crozier borne before him in his diocese. But Edward III. confirmed the primatial right of Armagh, by empowering him to erect his crozier in any part of the kingdom. After another struggle, Pope Innocent VI. decided that both Armagh and Dublin should be primatial sees; the one of all Ireland, and the other of Ireland—an unintelligible distinction, which continues to this day. Notwithstanding this decision, the controversy continued till the Reformation, when Edward VI. conferred the Primacy on Browne, as being the first Protestant Archbishop of Dublin. For a similar reason, Queen Mary restored Armagh. Finally, in 1634, Strafford confirmed this decision. The Archbishops of Cashel and Tuam still assume the titles of Primates of Munster and Connaught.

The invasion of the English added another element to this chaos, and fresh fuel to these political feuds and religious antipathies. It is evident, that till now, there could be no Convocation held, in the English sense of the word, because there was no Parliament.

The progress of the invaders occasioned such consternation among the clergy, “that they convened a Synod at Armagh, where it was unanimously agreed, that the cause of the divine displeasure, which the nation then experienced, could be no other than their unchristian practice of purchasing and selling Englishmen as slaves. It was therefore ordained, that the slave trade should be abolished, and that every English bondsman should be immediately set at liberty.” It is full time now, after 650 years, for Englishmen to call this example to mind, apply it to their own sins, and sympathise with the wrongs of the Africans. About the same time, Henry held a Synod at Cashel; Rhoderic, the last of the native Monarchs of Ireland, in Connaught; and the Primate two in Drogheda. Before this, they were generally annual. In the Synod convened by Henry, it was ordained, “that divine service in the Church of Ireland shall, for the future, be in all things conformable to that of the Church of England.”

Having cleared my way, by this preliminary detail, I shall proceed to note any facts that I have met with, relative to Irish Convocations. An account of them is a desideratum in ecclesiastical history, and it cannot be expected, that I should have made it the subject of deep research ; or that a point neglected, as far as I know, by a learned hierarchy and clergy, should be elucidated in a Presbyterian periodical.

Between 1295 and 1303, a Parliament was summoned, more regularly than heretofore, which set an example, and afforded a precedent for imposing an absentee tax ; but there is no mention made of its being attended by a Convocation : and soon after King Edward I. demanded a subsidy from the clergy, which indicates, that they had not contributed to the parliamentary grants. This parliament was attended by Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots and Priors, but not by the inferior clergy ; and there is no mention of their holding a separate assembly. In the following reign, a parliament imposed a subsidy on the clergy, notwithstanding the vehement opposition of the Archbishop of Cashel, who contended, that by the great charter, the churches of England and Ireland were free ; and that those who infringed the immunities of the church were *ipso facto* excommunicated. The two succeeding parliaments, in which both estates sat in one house, passed laws, and levied subsidies, without any mention of a Convocation. When this king summoned the Irish representatives to meet him at Westminster, the Bishops were peremptorily ordered to select, in each diocese, two clergymen, as representatives of the clergy in *Parliament*, not *Convocation*. The first parliament of Henry VIII. also levied subsidies on the clergy, and revived the absentee tax, vesting two-thirds of the Irish revenues of absentees in the king, for the purposes of the state. Such was the state of this question before the Reformation.

To the Reformation itself, and more especially to the regulations relative to ecclesiastical jurisdiction, a formidable opposition was made by the two proctors, or delegates from each diocese, which had been usually summoned to parliament. They claimed to be a member of the legislative body, and to have a full right of suffrage in every public question. It therefore became necessary, before the act of supremacy was proposed, to define their

rights. It was accordingly declared by a previous act, "that their claim was presumptuous and groundless; that they were summoned merely as counsellors and assistants (as the king's judges and other learned men had decided,) whose assent and concurrence were by no means necessary to any Parliamentary transactions." Similar claims were set up in England, by zealous advocates for the rights of the clergy. Atterbury, after discussing this point, concludes, "that the clergy brought to parliament by the *præmunientes*, or præmonitory summons, were, to all intents and purposes, what they were long after called in the rolls of parliament, *the commons spiritual* of the realm." He does not, however, contend, that they are entitled to such privileges at present. These must have ceased when Convocations began to have a separate existence. The various changes that succeeded in the Church were effected by royal authority or Parliamentary enactment, as far as I know, without the interference of any Convocation, till 1615.

In that year, a Parliament and Convocation were held in Dublin, for the purpose principally of forming a public profession of faith for the Established Church of Ireland, to assert its independence on the Church of England. Doctor James Usher (or as Dr. Stuart, in his History of Armagh, spells the name, after authentic documents, Dr. Ussher) had by this time been eminently distinguished for learning and abilities, and to him this important work was entrusted. His attention had been considerably engaged by the writings of the then modern foreign divines, from which he had deeply imbibed the Calvinistic doctrines. The profession which he drew up consisted of 104 articles, in which were included, almost literally, the nine articles agreed on at Lambeth, in the year 1595, which were disapproved of by both Elizabeth and James. These were drawn up at a private meeting, by Archbishop Whitgift and a few more. The Queen ordered Sir Robert Cecil to signify to the Archbishop, "that she misliked much that any allowance had been given by his grace and his brethren for any such points to be disputed, being matter tender and dangerous to weak, ignorant minds; and thereupon commanded him to suspend the urging of them publicly, and suffering them to be debated in the pulpit." They include all the leading points of Calvinism. The whole

may be seen in the appendix to the second volume of Neal's History of the Puritans. The Convocation adopted the profession, and it was ratified by the Lord Deputy. Some attempts were made to prejudice the King against the compiler; but Usher had the address to guard against the insinuations of his enemies, and James was so just to his piety and erudition, that he soon after promoted him to the see of Meath.

The Reformation of Ireland was built upon a Puritanical foundation, though Episcopacy was the legal Establishment. Many of the Irish articles were nearly the same that the Puritans applied for at the Hampton Court Conference; beside the nine Lambeth articles;—the morality of the Lord's Day was strongly assisted; the observation of Lent was declared not to be a religious fast, but grounded merely on political considerations;—all Clergymen were declared to be lawfully called, who are chosen and called to the work, by men who have public authority given them in the Church, to call and send Ministers into the Lord's vineyard, which is an acknowledgement of the validity of the ordination of those Churches which have no Bishops; the consecration of Archbishops, Bishops, &c. is not even mentioned, to avoid the distinction between that order and that of Priests; and no power is ascribed to the Church, in making Canons, or censuring those who infringe them. On the whole, these articles seem contrived to compromise the difference between the Church and the Puritans—and they had that effect till the year 1634.

In the Convocation of 1634, these were abrogated, and the thirty-nine substituted in their room. Uniformity throughout the three kingdoms was the great object of Laud's ambition, and he was hostile to Calvinism. His unsuccessful attempt on Scotland was followed by disastrous consequences; but he flattered himself that a perfect conformity throughout Ireland, was a more practicable scheme. In this, his friend Wentworth co-operated with him, with the hearty concurrence of Charles I. His first object was the complete union of the churches of England and Ireland, by establishing the English articles and canons as the rule of doctrine and discipline. To this project, Usher was the principal obstacle. It was, no doubt, mortifying to the compiler of the Irish articles in the late reign, to have them

now threatened with a solemn abolition. To reconcile him to this measure, it was agreed, that no censure should be passed on any of the former Irish articles; but that they should be virtually, not formally abrogated by the establishment of those of the Church of England; and also, that the English canons should not be received in a body, but a collection made of such as might be most acceptable. These articles and canons were adopted more by the influence of authority, says Leland, than the inclinations of a great part of the clergy, although but one member ventured to avow his dissent.

This convocation granted eight subsidies, and solicited redress of several grievances, and correction of some disorders in ecclesiastical affairs. It is said, that some of the Presbyterian Ministers sat in this Assembly. The Dissentients were, probably, of this number.

This convocation met at the same time with a new Parliament, on the eve of the civil wars, which distracted both England and Ireland, with little intermission, for the remainder of the century. During this period, it was hardly possible, that any convocation should be regularly held. Atterbury says, that when he wrote, about the year 1700, convocation writs in Ireland were grown out of date, two new Parliaments having been successively summoned, without them. This interval included a large portion of that period. In his time, they ceased to have any operation on both countries.

In 1705, a Convocation was called to meet in Dublin, with the Parliament. The Heads of a Bill, relative to the Linen Manufacture being introduced, which the Clergy thought prejudicial to their Tithes, they determined to interpose. A Memorial was accordingly presented to the Commons, by the Lower House of Convocation, desiring, that the Bill might be stopped in its progress, until Counsel should be heard in their behalf. The Commons were highly offended at this interference of the Clergy, which they considered wholly unconstitutional. To avert their displeasure, the Convocation attempted to soften their Memorial, but without effect. The House voted, that every thing respecting the business should be erased from their journals.

The Tory Party in England had despatched emissaries to this country, to spread discontent among the

people, with respect to the safety of Church and State.--- Upon the meeting of Parliament, the Commons resolved, "that to promote such misunderstandings, by writing or dispersing pamphlets, or, in any way, to insinuate, that the Church was in danger, tended to encourage Popery, and the cause of the Pretender, and to weaken the Protestant interest; and was seditious, and of pernicious consequence to her Majesty's Government and the succession of the Protestant line, as by law established."

The High Church party in England seem not to have considered the difference between the two countries at this crisis. The Revolution had passed over England like a summer cloud, with little alarm and no loss, except of their abdicated King. Ireland, on the contrary, had been the theatre of a desperate war; and the loss of a single battle might have been followed by a general massacre and a bloody persecution, and entailed an endless series of hostilities between the two countries. King James's Bill of Attainder gave them to understand, that even if their lives were spared, their property would be confiscated, and they would have to seek subsistence, as exiles and paupers in a strange land. At least, these were the feelings and apprehensions of the Scotch and English settlers. To remove suspicion, or gratify their own feelings, the Convocation came to resolutions, to the following effect:—That the Church and State had lately been in the greatest danger, from which they were happily relieved by the Revolution effected by King William of Glorious Memory;---that the continuance and improvement of these blessings, under Providence, were owing to the auspicious reign of her Majesty, Queen Anne;---that the future security of the Church and Nation, under God, depended wholly on the succession of the Protestant line:---that if any Clergyman should, by word or writing, declare any thing contrary to these resolutions, he should be considered as a sower of sedition among Protestants of the Established Church, and an enemy to the constitution. This was well; but they could not close without giving vent to their virulence and intolerance in the following declaration:---"That for any person to teach or preach against the doctrines, government, rites, or ceremonies of the Established Church, or to keep seminaries for the education of youth, in principles contrary to it, in contempt of the Ecclesiastical laws

of the kingdom, was of pernicious consequence, and served to widen the divisions and schisms which prevailed in it."

This is the only blemish we have found in the character of the Irish Convocations. But their proceedings are so little known, that this may be owing to our ignorance, as much as to their merit. The transactions of the English Convocation at this period, are more fully recorded, and will display the nature of these assemblies in a clearer light. They shall be laid open in a future Article.

ERASMUS.

SCRIPTURE ITS OWN INTERPRETER.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 327.)

HEB. i. 1,—9.—“ God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,—hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds. Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high: Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son. And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, who maketh his angels spirits, and his Ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom: Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”

This is so remarkable a passage of Scripture, as to require some observations distinct from the remainder of the Epistle. *Who* was it that spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets? Was it God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Ghost; or was it the whole Trinity? It will be agreed on all hands, that it was either God the Father or the whole Trinity. The Unitarians maintain that the Father alone is meant by the word “God,” and consider this as a clear and unequivocal declaration of the inferiority of the Son—of the derivation of all the power that the Son hath—all his

superiority to angels, &c. from his Father. It is remarkable that the expression used is the same in the two cases: God spake by or in the prophets, and by or in his Son. Was it by or in the human nature of the Son that he spake? If so, then the Son, *by or in his human nature*, was appointed heir of all things; was the instrument by which God made the world; was in his human nature also the brightness of God's glory and the express image of his person: in his human nature upholds all things by the word of his power; sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; was made better than angels; was ordered to be worshipped by angels; and, in the same nature, is addressed in v. 8, as God. If the divine nature of the Son be spoken of, then in it he was only the instrument of Him with whom he was same in substance, equal in power and glory: he was appointed and exalted by him, was by him anointed with the oil of gladness, on account of his love of righteousness, and hatred of iniquity; which hatred and love were, I presume, as great in the other two persons as in the Son; was the organ by which the Father communicated his will; and Paul makes no distinction between God's speaking in or by the Prophets and his speaking in or by his Son—who, *if equal*, might as well have spoken in or by the Father. Let us suppose it to be "God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three persons in one God"—or, in other words, the Trinity that is here declared to have spoken unto the fathers by the prophets: and our shortest way of seeing the purport of this explanation is to substitute the word Trinity for God—thus—The Trinity hath in these last days spoken unto us by the Son of the Trinity, whom he [the Trinity] hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also the Trinity made the worlds, who being the brightness of the glory and the express image of the person of the Trinity, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high [or of the Trinity]. This is sufficient to show how completely this system deprives scripture of all its sense and consistency; and the substitution of the word Trinity, or of the equivalent words, "God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three persons in one God;" in all those passages in which the word God occurs, without any restriction, will clearly prove the fallacy of the Trinitarian scheme. Thus, for example, in the two following passages from this very Epistle, ii. 9,

10, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He, by the grace of God [*i. e.* the Trinity] should taste death for every man. For it became him [the Trinity], for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Is it in his human nature that Jesus is Captain of our salvation? then where is the necessity for an Almighty Saviour. Or is it in his divine nature? then the Trinity made one person of itself, which is equal to either of the other two persons, perfect through sufferings. Have the other two persons, to whom the third was from all eternity equal, been made perfect through sufferings, or do they remain imperfect for want of these sufferings? Again in ii. 13, "And again, behold, I and the children which God [*i. e.* the Trinity] has given me."

— iii. 1—6.—"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus: Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, in as much as he who hath builded the house, hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; But Christ as a Son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

The word "appointed" in the 2d verse, is the same in the original, as the word "made" in the 2d verse of the first chapter; but either expression sufficiently denotes inferiority. In v. 3, the word *man* is inserted by the translators; but it is not necessary to take it emphatically, as the very circumstance of instituting a comparison with Moses, to prove the greater worthiness of Christ, should be decisive of the controversy, if there were not another declaration in scripture on the subject. Can we suppose for a moment that Paul is undertaking to prove the greater worthiness of the Lord God Almighty to receive glory, than Moses, because of his having builded a house, and being as a son over this house which he had builded, while Moses was as a servant, for the testimony of those things to be spoken after.

— iv. 14.—"Seeing, then, that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." See v. 15.

— v. 5.—So also Christ glorified not *himself* to be made an high priest; but *he that said unto him*, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee."

— 8—10.—" Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and *being made perfect* he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him, called of God as high priest, after the order of Melchisedec." See also vi. 20, and vii. 3.

— vii. 22, &c.—" By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death; but this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that *come to God by him*, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and *made higher than the heavens.*"

HEB. viii. 1.—" Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: we have such an *high priest*, who is set on *the right hand of the throne* of the Majesty in the heavens; a *minister* of the sanctuary, &c.

— 6.—" But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the *mediator of a better covenant.*"

— ix. 11.—" But Christ being come an *high priest* of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building.

— 24.—" For *Christ* is not entered into the holy places made with hands,—but into heaven itself, now to appear *in the presence of God* for us."

— x. 7—9.—" Then said I, lo, I come to do *thy* will, O God."

— 12.—" But *this man*, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the *right hand of God*; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool."

— xii. 2.—" Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith: who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the *right hand of the throne of God.*"

— 23.—" To the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant," &c.

— xiii. 20.—Now the *God of peace*, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in *his sight*, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

JAMES i. 1.—" James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ."

— i. 27.—" Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, &c.

— ii. 1.—“ My brethren have not the faith of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.”

— iii. 9.—“ Therewith bless we God, even the Father.”

1 PETER i. 1—3.—“ Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers, &c., elect according to the foreknowledge of *God the Father*, through sanctification of the *Spirit*, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of *Jesus Christ*.—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” &c.

— 17.—“ And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.”

— 19—21.—But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who do by him believe in *God*, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in *God*.”

1 PETER ii. 4, 5.—“ To whom (viz. the Lord) coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but *chosen of God*, and precious. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, *acceptable to God through Christ*.”

— 21, and 23.—“ Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.—Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.”

— iii. 18.—“ For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that *he might bring us to God*.”

— 21, 22.—“ By the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is gone into heaven, and is on the *right hand of God*; angels and authorities and powers *being made subject unto him*.”

— 11.—“ That *God* in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ; to whom be praise and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.”

— v. 2—4.—“ Feed the flock of *God* which is among you.—And when the *chief shepherd* shall appear, ye shall receive a crown, of glory,” &c.

— 10.—“ But the *God of all grace*, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by *Jesus Christ*, make you perfect,” &c.

— 12.—“ I have written briefly, exhorting and testifying that *this is the true grace of God in which ye stand*.”

2 PETER i. 1, 2.—Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of *God* and our Saviour Jesus Christ; grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of *God*, and of Jesus our Lord, according as *his divine power* hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, *through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue*.”

— 17.—For he received from *God the Father* honour and glory; when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.

A writer, in the 10th Number of "The Orthodox Presbyterian," who signs himself "An Orthodox Layman," complains that no notice had been taken of an offer made by him to discuss certain passages of Scripture which he alleges in support of his view of the Trinity. But I am informed that a reply was sent to "The Orthodox Presbyterian," professing a willingness to enter into the discussion, if the Editor would promise to admit an answer on the terms proposed by the "Orthodox Layman," viz.: "calmly and dispassionately, keeping clear of personal invective," and "in the spirit of courtesy becoming the divine, the scholar, or the gentleman."—The reply that was sent to this communication amounted to an indirect refusal to give such admission. Yet "An Orthodox Layman" would, in this way, have had the advantage of choosing for himself such passages as he thought strongest for his own side. If he proceeded upon this principle in selecting the first six verses of the 6th chap. of Isaiah, as compared with John, xii. 37---41, he made rather an unfortunate choice. For there certainly is no such clearness here as you would expect in announcing a doctrine that is, according to the writer, "the foundation of christianity." So far is this from being the case, that Dr. Doddridge thus explains the words--- "These things, said Esaias, when he saw his glory and spake of him," *i. e.* "saw at that time the glory of Christ, *who was then the medium of divine manifestation*, and spake of him and of his times, or what would happen with respect to the reception of the Gospel, when he should preach it to the Jews." Now Dr. Doddridge is a very eminent Orthodox commentator, and although it would be directly opposite to my sentiments to bind any one by the authority of man in these matters, yet when Dr. Doddridge did not see clearly that this formed an argument for the Trinity, it cannot excite any surprise that we should be insensible to its force. The doctrine of Dr. Doddridge in this explanation coincides with the opinion of several eminent Arian writers, and "An Orthodox Layman" has, perhaps unknowingly, so far come over to the Arianism maintained by the Rev. Henry Taylor, author of *Ben Mordecai's Letters*, &c. as to admit that Christ's appearances and attributes are recorded in the Old Testament under the character of the *angel of the Lord*. Now it is clear that the *angel of the Lord* can-

not be the *Almighty*, whose angel he is. *Almighty God* is no where called an *angel*, i. e. a messenger. Jesus Christ, in his pre-existent state, is so called, according to "An Orthodox Layman," therefore *Jesus Christ is not Lord God Almighty*, which is the very opposite of the conclusion at which he wished to arrive. He makes a distinction between created and uncreated Angels---but I have to request his authority for so doing, as I cannot find any such distinction in Scripture. If it were not for swelling this article to too great a bulk I could give some interesting extracts from Ben Mordecai's letter on the subject of these appearances of the Angel of the Lord as representative of him who (it is admitted by all) *has never been, can never be, seen or heard*. "An Orthodox Layman" says that he joins issue with the writer, who maintains that "Christ declares himself to be subordinate to the Father, deriving his being from him---receiving from him his divine nature, authority, and other attributes, and acting in all things wholly according to the will of the Father," and denies that the portions of Scripture adduced by him in favour of this sentiment, at all relate to Christ having received, at any period of time, his *divine power* or his *divine nature* from God the Father. After this I expected a detailed examination of the evidence, in order to show its insufficiency, but we have not as yet been favoured with any thing more than the bare assertion, which is not enough to satisfy our minds.

I conclude with expressing my approbation of the temperate spirit with which this writer is disposed to carry on controversy, and should hope that this will lead him, if not immediately to Arianism, at least to a departure from the *ultra* principles of what is called Orthodoxy.

EREUNETES.

P. S. There is another article on the Trinity, in the same number, signed "Beta," but it would occupy too much time to examine it in detail, and expose all its false reasoning. The jet of the whole consists in endeavouring to show that the form of blessing, used by Paul, 2 Cor. xiii. 14. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all," is sufficient to prevent any one that hears it from returning to his home an Anti-Trinitarian. To make this out, he says there are three Divine Persons

prayed to, on a perfect equality, that they may bless the saints with blessings peculiar to each. Even if this were so, we might have a proof of three persons as distinct objects, to be addressed in prayer, or three Gods---but none that three are one. In fact, however, there is not prayer offered to each of the three persons at all. There is only a devout wish expressed that the Almighty would bestow upon the Saints the grace of Jesus Christ, the love of God, and a participation in the gifts of the Holy Spirit: nor are any of these forms prayers to Christ, any more than the prayer or wish "Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord." Trinitarians too have to account for the very extraordinary circumstance of one at least out of the Three that are equally entitled to prayer and adoration, being *always* omitted in these forms, except in the one instance quoted.

[We insert the following article from a Correspondent, for whose favours we are grateful; and merely state, for the information of some of our readers, that the late Dr. Dwight was president of Yale College, Connecticut, that he published several works on Theology, and was at the very head of the Orthodox party in America. As he has been much before the public, and his sermons are read with the most profound reverence by the genuine disciples of Calvin, we think the following review of one of them will place *its* merits, at least, in a clear light, and be both entertaining and useful.—ED.]

Perplexity and difficulty manifested by Dr. Dwight, in his attempt to reconcile the proper Godhead of Jesus Christ, with his humiliation and subsequent exaltation.

THE simplicity and majesty of divine truth free it entirely from all absurdity, difficulty, and perplexity; and wherever these are found in any theological discussion, we may justly suspect the intervention of some human sophism, calculated not to illustrate, but to bewilder the subject, and confound the understanding of the reader. This is eminently exemplified in the following instance, which I transcribe from Dr. Dwight's 59th Sermon, entitled, "CHARACTER OF CHRIST AS A KING." The text of this sermon commences rather abruptly, for want of introducing from the preceding verse, "the working of the mighty power of God." It therefore begins,—"*which he wrought in Christ when he raised*

him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And hath put all things under his feet; and gave him to be the head over all things to the church." Ephes. i. 20—22.

"We are taught," says the Dr. in this passage, "*That God hath exalted Christ to this dominion.*" In these expressions, the exaltation of Christ to the dominion and dignity ascribed to him in the text, is as unequivocally attributed to the Father as it can be in human language. I insist on this doctrine of the text: I have insisted on it particularly, because it has been made by Unitarians an argument against the divinity of Christ. "If," say they, "Christ is a *divine person*,* whence is it that we hear so many things said in the scriptures concerning his exaltation, and particularly of his exaltation by the Father? If Christ is God, how is it possible that he should be in any sense exalted? But should we, contrary to plain probability, suppose him to have undergone voluntarily an apparent humiliation, can he, who is truly God, be indebted to any other than himself for a restoration to his former dignity and greatness? To be exalted at all, necessarily involves a preceding state of inferiority, particularly to the state to which he is exalted; and certainly of inferiority to the proper state and character of Jehovah. He who has all power, knowledge, wisdom, and greatness, cannot have more, and therefore can in no sense be exalted. To be exalted by *another* person, also involves dependence on that person, and a dependent being cannot be God."

After stating this very powerful argument, the Dr. proceeds to say,—"*As this is, in my view, the most plausible argument against the divinity [say supreme Godhead] of Christ, and that which has more weight in my own mind than any other, though I believe less relied on than some others, I shall consider it with particular*

* In stating this argument, the Dr. should have said, "If Christ is *the supreme God*;" for, as the *Son of God*, he must be "a divine person," but necessarily inferior to the Father, as *deriving his existence from him*; John xiv. 28. Had the Dr. only believed and recognised this one simple fact, all his difficulty would have vanished!

attention." "That *exaltation* involves a state of preceding inferiority is, I apprehend, *intuitively certain*; and that he who is exalted by another must be a dependent being, dependent upon him by whom he is exalted, cannot be denied. Let us see how far this argument is applicable to Christ, and how far it will conclude against his Deity."

"It must be acknowledged," the Dr. continues, "that if Christ be God in the true and proper sense, it is impossible for him to be exalted above the dignity and greatness which he originally, and *always* possessed. He cannot be more powerful, wise, or excellent. He originally possessed all things, and therefore can have nothing given to him."

From this argument, and this concession, any man of common sense would naturally conclude that the unavoidable result was, that "Christ *cannot be God* in the true and proper sense;" for the scriptures expressly tell us, that *he was thus exalted* by his God and Father. But the conclusion which the Dr. draws from his premises, is quite different; he says, "It cannot of course be *in this sense* that the scriptural writers speak of Christ as exalted." And now commences the Dr.'s confusion; for he adds, "But it is equally clear, and will be equally insisted upon by every Trinitarian, that Christ is *man* as well as *God*; and in this *character* it is evident that he can receive exaltation, and that to any degree less than infinite." That the same being, yea, *the same person*, as the Trinitarian insists, is at once, both *the supreme God*, and *a created man*, is a most preposterous absurdity and palpable falsehood. It asserts that *God is a man*, and *a man is God*; and thus it destroys all distinction between *Deity* and *humanity*, robs the Almighty of his personal identity, as well as his peculiar glory, and reduces him to a level with one of his creatures. The heathen mythology presents no absurdity greater than this; it is also a direct contradiction to the scriptures, which expressly testify that "*God is not a man*," (1 Sam. xv. 29,)---nor could he ever, by any possibility, become a man, for a man is a *created* and *dependent being*; but God is an uncreated, and eternally self-existent, and independent being. The same being, therefore, cannot be "both God and man." But the Dr. proceeds; "It is further evident, according to the Trinitarian doctrine,

that the Messiah, or Mediator, Jesus Christ, is distinguishable from Christ considered as God, and from Christ considered as man." So, then, the Dr. has *three Christs*; viz. Christ the Messiah and Mediator, Christ the God, and Christ the man! This is unquestionably a new Trinity! And so distinct are these, that blessings may be bestowed upon one in which the others do not at all participate; and in like manner one Christ may suffer, while the others remain impassive! He then tells us that Christ *the Messiah* or *Mediator*, is constituted by the union of the eternal word with *the man* Christ Jesus." What kind of an union was this? An *hypostatical* one, "as the Westminster Assembly expresses it, of two distinct natures in one person for ever." Nay, not merely of two natures, but of two distinct *persons* or *beings*; for one of them is "the eternal God," and the other "the man Christ Jesus!" So, then, God becomes one *component part* of a newly fabricated being, of which a man is another component part; for the Dr. tells us, "This Mediator in his complete character *began to exist*, i. e. the God as well as the man began to exist in his new capacity; God then first began to think, struggle, and, no doubt, to *cry* also, as a constituent part of a newly created complex infant, "at the birth of the man Jesus Christ;" and "as being *a person* then *new* to the universe." With humble reverence I suspect the Almighty must have been quite surprised, and not much pleased, with his strange metamorphosis; that is, if he had any recollection or consciousness of his *former mode* of existence!" The Dr. goes on,—

"Of this mediator, then commencing his perfect existence, the predictions concerning his kingdom, &c. are all written." The *half* of this mediator, we must keep in mind, was God—who never commenced his *perfect existence* as such, and his office was to mediate with himself! But of this complex mediator, the Dr. informs us, "St. Paul says—wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name; that *at**

* The Greek preposition here used by St. Paul (Philippians, ii. 10.) is in strict conformity with the command of Christ himself to his disciples, "whatsoever ye shall ask the Father *in my name* he will give it you." Thus, "ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full," John, xvii. 23, 24.; which ought to be translated *in*, and not *at*, as its true meaning is, that men should offer up their petitions and praises to the Father, in the name of the Son.

(or *in*) the name of Jesus every knee should bow."—Hence, it follows from the Doctor's own premises—either that God forms *no part* of the "mediator" in question, or that he is as one part thereof, in common with the other part of him, the actual subject of "*exaltation*," and consequently of "*previous inferiority*." But the Dr. assures us, that God is a *constituent part* of the mediator, and consequently, he *exalts himself* to his own right hand ! For "it is," adds the Dr. "of the mediator, that it is said in the text,—God set him *at his own right hand* in the heavenly places, far above every name that is named in this world, and in that which is to come." This session of the *Deity*, in his *new mode of existence* at the right hand of the *same Deity*, in his *old mode of existence*, bids defiance to all parallel, unless "the glorious mystery of *transubstantiation*," can match it, by representing Jesus Christ, as "*eating his own body, soul, and divinity*;" and handing it both *right and left* to his disciples to do the same !

The Dr. proceeds ; as the "*mediator Jesus Christ began to exist* at the birth of the *man Jesus Christ* ; which blind infatuation had bewildered this man's mind, which prevented his reading and believing the testimony of the Holy Ghost ; that "*there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus* ;" proving that the mediator is the man, and the man is the mediator ! By what authority then does he presume to *distinguish* the one from the other ? while he makes the commencement of their existence coeval, although "*the mediator*" includes the incorporation of the *eternal God* ! So, until his resurrection, he existed in a state of humiliation, only the Word, though originally *in the form of God*, yet, voluntarily took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man. "In this form or character of a servant, he fulfilled all the several duties which he had engaged to perform, and in this humble character he acted till he arose from the dead."

Of whom is all this predicated ? Unquestionably of the divine Logos, who constituted "*the divine nature of the mediator*," in the Doctor's own description of his fabrication ! And could Dr. Dwight not perceive in this fact, the complete overthrow of his own rotten system ?---That divine nature, says he, was the eternal God, and consequently incapable of either the privation of glory

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new work, in which we find recorded the operations of a mind, seriously intent upon ascertaining the truth, and following up its own associations and reasonings until it arrive at its conclusions, we consider to have a value much greater than results from the mass of information contained in it. Every mind thus occupied, and thus manifesting itself, may meet with some kindred minds of analogous formation, if we may use the expression, whose energies have never been roused from dormancy by any other statement of an argument, but may be excited and roused, may start into activity, when the mind meets with a process of thought more congenial to its own, and pouring into it a flood of light illustrating its darkness. This may be the case, and yet the argument that produces such an effect upon one, may strike another as less efficient than the views of the same subject on which he has produced and built his faith. We consider this to be a powerful reason for the publication of new works. It is an end that cannot be answered by referring to those of older date, however valuable they may be: for even supposing them to be easily procured, which is not the case, the peculiar turn of the public mind must be consulted, not in the substance but in the form. This work deserves particular attention from those who have the treatise to which it is a reply, but, as far as we can judge, can be clearly understood and profitably read by those who have never met with the work of Mr. Jones.

But then there is another circumstance that invests this publication with greater interest. It is the publication of Mr. Shaw, of Bath, formerly a respectable merchant in London—a member of the Church of England, “because, take it for all in all, he believes it to be the best Church of the present day.” The author is “far advanced in years,” of a “serious turn of mind,” having a wish “that he might rightly understand and entirely believe, every important article of doctrine professed by the Church of which he is a member;” who had been “in the habit of reading the Holy Scriptures the greater part of his life, but seldom opened the book without meeting some passages which appeared to him to be directly opposed to the doctrine of the Trinity, in the way in which that doctrine is set forth in the Athanasian and Nicene creeds.”

“This was a cause of grief to me for many years. I eagerly read

every book I could meet with, written in defence of these creeds, and most scrupulously shunned the writings of those who controverted them. In the course of my researches, I sometimes met with arguments, managed with such address and ability as made a strong impression on my mind in favour of the doctrine; but, on my return to the Bible, these impressions were constantly effaced. For one text or expression, from which the doctrine could, in any possible way, be inferred, I met with ten, which, in my humble judgment, pointedly and unequivocally denied it. I was at length informed, that the Rev. Mr. Jones, of Nayland, had published a work which set the matter at rest;—that he had incontrovertibly proved the doctrine to be scriptural. I immediately procured his “Catholic Doctrine of a Trinity,” and read it with attention. It did not appear to me to be by any means satisfactory: I could not but suspect that he had dealt unfairly with the Holy Scriptures. I resolved to take the first convenient opportunity of setting about a minute examination of every text he had quoted, and every argument he had advanced. I foresaw that this would be a laborious task, requiring much time, and, as far as possible, an abstraction from every other pursuit.

“Many years passed over before I found a fit opportunity for the undertaking: it was not till the winter of 1825, when confined by ill health, that I commenced my task.

“I considered the matter to be of so much importance to my own peace of mind, that, for more than two years, it was principally, I may almost say exclusively, the subject of my meditations, and the object of my inquiry. I made the Sacred Scriptures my guide, and wholly unassisted (excepting only by the comments of writers deemed orthodox) I laboured through the work.

“No one can hesitate to give Mr. Jones the credit of sincerity and good intentions; yet I cannot but think he has injured, rather than supported his cause. This appeared to me to be so obviously the case, that, when I had gone through his work, I doubted if it were proper to give my Confessions in the form of a review of it; for it might be said, that the doctrine must not be condemned, because it has been injudiciously stated, and weakly defended by Mr. Jones. But on farther consideration, as the book has strangely obtained a considerable degree of celebrity, and moreover, as it afforded me the opportunity of bringing forward a powerful body of Scriptural evidence, I thought it might as well remain in that form.

“That the sentiments of an individual who has no pretensions to the character of a man of learning, will be considered only contemptible by writers esteemed orthodox, may be fully expected at the present time; yet I confidently predict, that, before half a century passes over, the doctrine stated in these pages will be generally, if not un-animously confessed throughout this kingdom.

“It may be fairly asked, upon what grounds I hazard so bold a prediction? In the first place, a surprising expansion of the human intellect, within the last thirty years (especially in our own country) has been noticed by every discerning person.

“Men are beginning to emancipate their minds from the trammels imposed upon them by *great names*, and are disposed to compare au-

thorities, and to judge for themselves. Secondly, though we have frequent proof of great depravity and impiety among the very ignorant classes, Christianity is more seriously, and more generally inquired into, by the better-informed part, than it had hitherto been; we may therefore hope for a rapid progress in true Christian knowledge. Thirdly, the Greek language is now more generally studied than it had been in former times. This is very important; for it has been admitted, by many orthodox Divines, that our present translation of the New Testament (though probably the best extant) is incorrect in several places; and not a few of the inaccuracies will be found to affect the awful subject which I have ventured to discuss. Lastly, I feel perfectly satisfied that the doctrine here stated, is that which was taught by our blessed Lord and his Apostles."

"JOHN SHAW.

"*Bath, 4th December, 1827.*"

We know that Mr. Shaw's case is by no means singular. It has long been our firm conviction from evidence brought before us at different times, that there are many in that Church sympathizing entirely with this author. We know that there are vast numbers belonging nominally to that Church, who assume to themselves the liberty of forming opinions on this leading doctrine altogether at variance with the Athanasian and Nicene Creeds. We cannot say that we approve of this state of things; because we do not see how such can with propriety, where they have other societies more nearly according with their views which they can join, continue to belong to a church in which they are obliged so very frequently, on the most solemn occasions, to profess their belief in those creeds, by standing up when they are read and joining in the "Amen," at the end. On the other hand, we do not wish to judge our brethren too harshly in this. Some may have prejudices concerning Episcopal ordination, and the efficacy of baptism from the hands of Episcopally ordained Ministers; others may from early associations be attached to the form of common prayer; others again may only have the alternative of joining some Calvinistic Trinitarians---while all may plead the example of serious, pious men, such as Dr. Samuel Clarke, Henry Taylor, the author of "*Ben Mordecai*," Bishops Clayton, Hoadly, and Archbishop Newcome, for adhering to the Church, and forming opinions at variance with its standards: and, although the example must be admitted to be bad, still the fact

that such able and godly men have not been struck with the impropriety, should disarm our judgment of all its severity.

In one respect Mr. Shaw has manifested a considerable degree of moral fortitude. He has affixed his name and residence to the Preface; and it is a very bold thing to do so at present. There is a system of terror in operation by which every man that dares to be sincere, and allow his opinions to be known, is at once scowled on by his former friends; and, if not vilified by them, all acquaintance at least is dropped; and we have known cases, in which valuable men, of the highest moral and religious worth, at a late period of their lives, without the slightest change of principle or conduct, have been shunned and neglected by their closest intimates, because they *avowed* themselves dissatisfied with the evidence for the Trinitarian doctrine. Under these circumstances, a man, descending into the vale of years, requires strength to bear him up against all these unholy terrors; and the author of this work will, we are sure, from the feeling and piety that are manifestly the characters of his mind, be supported by Him who hath promised to give the aid of his spirit to him that sincerely asketh for it.

That our readers may form some idea of the style and spirit of the book, we subjoin a few extracts:

“I have now endeavoured to supply that which Mr. Jones had omitted, namely, to bring forward such passages of Scripture as have been commonly used as proof of the personality of the Holy Spirit. If I have omitted any that have been usually quoted for that purpose, or treated those I have noticed unfairly, I can conscientiously say it was not by design.

“I have truly affirmed, that I searched the Scripture sedulously for many years, in the hope of finding some satisfactory proof of this personality; but I could never find a passage that plainly declared it, whilst a number met my eye in which the notion of a *Person*, applied to the *Spirit*, would be grossly absurd. Nothing of the kind is proved by those texts in which the Holy Spirit is personified, as, “*The Holy Spirit said, separate me Barnabas and Saul.*” “*Well spake the Holy Spirit by Esaias,*” &c.—Such personification of gifts, virtues, attributes, &c. are common throughout the Bible. Wisdom, Grace, the Law, &c. are personified in terms quite as strong as any that are used in reference to the Spirit. *Grace* is mentioned more than fifty times in the New Testament, precisely in the same sense as that in which the *Holy Spirit* is named; and is frequently personified in the same way. In the first chapter of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians, he expresses his thankfulness for the Divine goodness, in adopting believers, as children, by Jesus Christ, adding, at

the 6th verse, "To the *praise of the glory of his Grace.*" In no part of the Bible is the *Spirit* personified and deified in language so strong. Many instances of this kind of personification might be adduced, whilst the Holy Spirit is very frequently mentioned in a manner that precludes the idea of personality. To quote the various texts wherein this incompatibility is obvious would be a tedious task; indeed Bishop Tomline, in his able and guarded defence of the doctrine of the Trinity, confesses that the expression (Holy Spirit) "is sometimes used to signify an attribute, an energy, operation, quality, or power of God."

"It is hard to believe, that the term *Holy Spirit* should in some parts of the Scriptures signify a Person equal with the Almighty Father, and in other parts merely a spiritual energy shed upon the human mind! In truth, the Bible is plain and intelligible so long as we give the latter meaning to the term, but if we consider it as signifying a *Person* distinct from the Father and the Son, all is confusion and difficulty—sometimes absurdity.

"In what part of the Bible is it declared that the Spirit is the gift of a third Person? This I have never been able to discover;—on the contrary it is again and again unequivocally stated to be the gift of the Almighty Father, and obtained through the merits and intercession of his ever-blessed Son. Indeed, our Church seems to betray not only a considerable degree of diffidence upon this point, but also a strange inconsistency between the creeds and the prayers. The former confess the Spirit to be a Person equal with the Father, and to be "the Lord and giver of life;" and he is declared, by eminent Divines, to be the Dispenser of spiritual gifts. If he be the giver of these spiritual blessings, why is not *He* more especially supplicated to bestow them? But we find the *Father* invoked, throughout the Liturgy, to grant "the inspiration of his Holy Spirit." There is but one short sentence of prayer addressed to the *Third Person*, and even that does not petition for spiritual assistance. In these prayers for the gift of the Spirit, the compilers of our Liturgy adhered to the doctrine of the Bible. St. Peter, speaking of the Gentile converts, says, "God, which knoweth the hearts, *giving them the Holy Spirit*, even as unto us." (Acts xv. 8.)

"It has been argued that visible objects, as the appearance of a Dove descending upon our Saviour at his baptism, and the "cloven tongues like as of fire," which sat upon each of the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, prove the *personality* of the Holy Spirit; but this can have no weight on a reflecting mind. The Almighty condescended to give a *sensible* evidence of his favour upon many occasions, during the earlier stages of the Mosaic dispensation, and the like evidences were granted during the ministry of our Lord and his Apostles, when in the Divine wisdom it was seen to be necessary; but these supernatural appearances afford no proof of a third Person in the Deity.

"To suppose that the Almighty Being came down from Heaven in the form of a Dove, or of luminous tongues, is an idea too gross and heathenish to be admitted for a moment; and unless we suppose this, nothing to the purpose is proved by these miraculous appearances .

"The method to which Mr. Jones and other writers resort, for proof of the personality and Divinity of the Holy Spirit, appears to me to be extremely fallacious. By quoting a text of Scripture which ascribes to the *Spirit of God* a certain effect or operation, and another text ascribing the same kind of operation to *God himself*, they imagine they have proved the existence of two Persons in the Godhead.

"Now, if in the Roman history we read of the surprising effects produced by the *eloquence of Cicero*, and in other parts of the book see the same effects ascribed to *Cicero himself*, are we to suppose that Cicero consisted of two persons, one of his own proper name and the other that of *Eloquence*? I trust there is nothing profane or irreverent in this comparison; I know no other way of expressing my idea of these arguments.

"Mr. Jones seems not to have been aware of the strange doctrines which might be supported by his method of using the Holy Scriptures. To give but one example (and many might be given), we read, in the 12th chapter 1st verse of the Book of Samuel, the following words:—"And *Samuel* said unto all Israel, Behold, *I* have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto *Me*, and have made a king over you." But in other places, it is said that it was *Jehovah* who hearkened unto their voice, and made a king over them. Now, by Mr. Jones's method, Samuel is absolutely declared to be Jehovah.

"In concluding my confessions upon this subject, I must recur to the remark I made at the beginning of the section, namely, that when our Lord gave the Apostles the promise of another Guide and Monitor, to teach them all things after his departure, it was not *personal*, but *spiritual* and *mental* assistance they were led to expect; and that the matter may be submitted to this plain question, Who is declared to be the giver of this spiritual guide?—In my humble judgment, a plain and satisfactory answer is given in the very words of the promise—"I will pray the FATHER, and HE shall give you another Comforter." (John xiv. 16.) I can find nothing in the New Testament that contradicts, or that even renders in any degree equivocal, the words here quoted. The promised Paraclete is repeatedly declared to be the gift of the Almighty Father, through his ever-blessed Son; a third Person is nowhere named as the Giver."

At the end of the work there is a "Brief Essay on Socinianism:" The occasion of his writing, we will let him state in his own words:

"I have affirmed, and I here solemnly repeat it, that I had never read any Unitarian work when I composed my former Essay. Nearly a year had elapsed after I had completed that work before I looked into any Unitarian or Socinian publication. Since that time I have read several works from the pens of the most eminent writers of the latter persuasion. I have generally found them powerful and satisfactory, so far as they oppose the Athanasian doctrine, and treat of the early corruptions of Christianity: but in their defence of the peculiar doctrines, which we understand by the term *Socinianism*, I humbly conceive they are weak and unscriptural. If the following pages should convince but an individual who may have imbibed their

notions, of the error and the danger of such doctrine, I should consider my time to have been well employed.

“J. S.

“*Bath, 30th June, 1829.*”

This Essay is distinguished by being temperate, judicious, candid, and forcible in its statements and arguments; but the length of our extracts and remarks prevents us from making any further quotations.

THE REMONSTRANT SYNOD AND “THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN.”

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 325.)

IN the last No. of *The Bible Christian*, I exposed, at some length, the erroneous “Statistics” of *The Orthodox Presbyterian*. Where almost every sentence contained either an untruth or a misrepresentation, it was scarcely possible to uncover all the deformities of that disgraceful production; and I find that one mis-statement of the grossest kind escaped animadversion. The Orthodox oracle asserts, “that while *seventeen* Ministers have withdrawn from the Synod of Ulster, the breach is filled up by *nine Ministers and nine congregations*, leaving barely *eight Ministers and eight congregations* that have totally withdrawn from the Orthodox communion.” This is a remarkable sentence in every respect; and in the usual Orthodox style, it completely *contradicts itself*. The first clause says *truly*, that “*seventeen* Ministers have withdrawn from the Synod of Ulster;” and the second clause asserts *falsely*, “that barely *eight* Ministers have totally withdrawn.” But this is not all: it seems that *nine Ministers and nine congregations* have filled up the breach.” Now, in these prolific times, when congregations are produced like mushrooms---when any eight or ten families of the lowest stations and characters, assembling together in some hay-loft or barn, are dignified with the title of a *congregation*, I do not say, that there may not be *nine such* societies “to fill up the breach;” but *Ministers* are generally *tangible things*, having *names and places of abode*—I, therefore, call upon the *Orthodox Presbyterian* to state *who* the nine Ministers are, and where they re-

side! I know that a young man, named *Shields*, has been ordained to a small congregation, collected from various sects, in Newry; and that a *Mr. Anderson* has been appointed to a similar society, in Banbridge. Of the other *seven* I never heard: in fact, they have no existence but in the fertile imagination of the Orthodox oracle; and the statement has been put forth, without even a shadow of truth, merely to “fill up a breach.”

Having completed *one fiction*, the reverend author proceeds to *another*, and luxuriates in his wonted enjoyment of *calling names!* The Remonstrants are branded as “Arians or Socinians.” Strictly speaking, there is not an Arian amongst them; and the writer well *knew*, when he penned the calumny, that there was not a *Socinian* in Ulster. But it is easier to *call names*, to which the ignorant multitude have been taught to attach the most absurd and horrible ideas, than to refute *arguments* which are based upon the truth of God. The vile practice is as old as Popery; and has been, ever since, the chief weapon of tyranny and priestcraft. But the power of superstition, and the reign of prejudice are rapidly passing away; and the *nick-names* of *Arian* and *Socinian* will, ere long, have as little influence in darkening the lustre of truth, as the arrogant assumption of *Orthodoxy* will have in concealing the deformity of error. The people are becoming too enlightened to be hurried along by the mere sound of names, and the virulent clamour of the clergy: they have begun to look at *realities*, and to judge for *themselves*. The Remonstrants, therefore, care little by what name they may be called, or by what calumnies they may be assailed: they will humbly endeavour to vindicate their title to the glorious appellation of *Christians*, and to refute all the slanders which may be uttered against their *principles*, by the purity of their *lives*. They have no wish to conceal from the people any doctrine which they believe; on the contrary, they anxiously desire that their opinions may be thoroughly understood; being fully convinced that they only require to be *known* in order to be *adopted*. But as *they* do not hypocritically pretend to an absolute uniformity of belief, and as *they* utterly disclaim all human authority in matters of faith, they will not tamely submit to have the brand of any human leader imprinted on their brows. They equally reject the authority of Arius and

Socinus, of Luther and Calvin: “*One is their Master, even CHRIST;*” and they will have no other. The majority of them are, doubtless, *Unitarians*; that is, they believe, with the Apostle, that there is but “*ONE GOD, the Father, and ONE MEDIATOR between God and Man.*” They glory in the advocacy of this sublime, simple, edifying, fundamental, all-important Truth: and they devoutly praise the Lord that it is rapidly advancing in the world. A thousand *Synods of Ulster*, and ten thousand *Orthodox Presbyterians*, could not arrest its progress. The BIBLE has gone forth, in its glory and its might, unshackled by notes or comments, “conquering and to conquer;” and as well might they hope “to arrest the rolling world or chain the deep,” as to conceal the GRAND TRUTH of the Bible, the *Unity of God*, from the eyes of those who read with a sincere and humble desire to receive instruction from on high.

Having sufficiently exercised his usual artillery of foul names, “*The Orthodox Presbyterian*” concentrates all his forces for a tremendous attack, “sword in hand,” upon the positions which the Remonstrant Synod had taken up, in the twelve *Resolutions* forming the constitution of their new Association. He knew well that his adherents expected something from him, and he felt that his office of leader was no sinecure. However, he determined to make up in noise and fury, what he wanted in power; just as I have seen a crafty lawyer fume, and fret, and bluster, in order to please his client, when he was aware that he had a weak or rotten cause. But I shall leave all figures of speech, and come to the plain matters of fact. The subject is both serious and interesting, and merits calm and dispassionate discussion.

With the *first* resolution of the Remonstrant Synod, the Reverend Author expresses “his most hearty and unqualified concurrence.”

The resolution runs in these words:—

“That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the only Infallible Rule of Faith and Duty, and contain all knowledge necessary to salvation.”

Now, when my Orthodox friend “expresses his hearty concurrence” in this sentiment, is he speaking in earnest or in jest? If he be in *earnest*, he will very soon join the Remonstrants; for, if he be an honest man, “he can find no rest for the sole of his foot” in the Synod of Ul-

ster: if he be only in *jest*, the subject is too serious for levity. Had the General Synod adopted this incontrovertible principle, and *acted* upon it in good faith, the Remonstrant Synod would never have been called into existence. It was the *literal* and *practical* denial of this great principle in the Overtures of 1828, that laid the foundation of all the evils which have since arisen; but out of which, under Providence, much good is rapidly springing up. The *fourth* Overture actually sets aside the Bible altogether, in the licensing of candidates, and establishes the *paramount* authority of the Westminster Confession of Faith:—

“That Students, after having finished their Theological course and their trials in the Presbytery, shall again present themselves for a similar examination, before the same Committee; and it shall be the duty of that Committee to ascertain their soundness in the faith, by requiring from them a statement of their views of the doctrines contained in the *Westminster Confession of Faith*.”

How does any member of the General Synod, with such a frightful law before his eyes, dare to speak of reverencing “the Scriptures as the *only* infallible rule of faith and duty?” Even in those few places, where a pretence is made of respecting the Bible, it uniformly means, not the Bible *itself*, but *human interpretations of its doctrines*. Did the Remonstrants ever refuse to submit, implicitly, to the sacred teaching of the Holy Spirit in the Divine Records? Never. To that blessed teaching, they always bowed with the most profound reverence, and ever will bow; but the fact is notorious as the mid-day sun—they were driven from the General Synod, because they would not take the Confession of Faith, and the vain interpretations of the Synod’s Theological Committee, “as the *only* infallible standards of faith and duty.” Even “The Orthodox Presbyterian” will not have the effrontery to deny this *recorded fact*; and yet he attempts “to throw dust in the people’s eyes,” by talking of his “heartly concurrence” in the very principle which he audaciously trampled under his feet. Does it not argue the complete rottenness of his cause, when his practice and his profession thus stand opposed to each other, like east and west? If he have *done* right, why shrink from the defence of his own *acts*, and take shelter under the wings of his opponents?

The *second resolution* of the Remonstrants is as follows :

“ That it is the inalienable right of every Christian to search these records of Divine Truth, for his own instruction and guidance ; to form his own opinions with regard to what they teach ; and to worship God in sincerity, agreeably to the dictates of his own conscience, without privation, penalty, or inconvenience inflicted by his fellow men.”

Will it be credited, that even the madness of party and the blindness of prejudice could induce any member of a *Protestant Church* to controvert the principles laid down in the above resolution—principles as clearly established by the authority of God in the sacred Scriptures, as they are accordant with the enlightened reason of Christian men? Strange, however, as it may seem, the melancholy fact cannot be denied. The “ *Orthodox Presbyterian* ” directs a deadly assault against the very foundation of Protestantism. He does it, too, in a manner and a spirit the most deplorable; by reiterating all the *cant*, and resorting to all the shocking *perversions of Scripture*, which have disgraced the *rulers* of the General Synod, for the last three years. He admits, indeed, “ that every man has an inalienable right to *search* the Scriptures;” but he positively denies “ that a man has any right to search them for his own instruction and guidance, or to *form his own opinions with regard to what they teach!*” Might I venture, then, “to inquire of this Orthodox Divine, “ what *benefit* can any man derive from *searching* the Scriptures, if he have no right to *form any opinion* with regard to *what they contain?*” On the principle of being allowed to *form no judgment* respecting the Divine truths recorded in the Bible, a man might be as well employed in reading “ an old ballad,” or even the trash of the “ *Orthodox Presbyterian*,” as in reading or hearing “ what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.” Nay, on this truly *Orthodox principle* “ of forming no opinion,” the Apostle Paul made an egregious blunder, when he exhorted “ every man” amongst the Romans “ to be fully persuaded in his own mind;” and when he addressed the Corinthians, in these memorable words—“ I speak as unto wise men, JUDGE ye what I say!” Indeed, the Orthodox themselves triumphantly quote these very texts, when they wish to disenthral the Catholics from the trammels of their Church; but when they come to deal with their Remonstrant brethren, “ the case is altered quite!” Then, there is no more “ *persuasion in their own minds;*”

no more "*judging what the Apostle says!*" No: all must be submission to "the Church;" and even "Scripture must be wrested" to the purposes of human usurpation. When our Saviour saith, "Is it not written in the Prophets, and they shall all be taught of God?" evidently meaning, "they shall all be taught by the Revelation of God's Holy Word"—the Orthodox interpreter infers that our Blessed Lord alludes to the *miraculous instruction* of every individual, by the immediate agency of the Spirit! If this be true, where is the use of any Revelation at all? If Scripture can convey no instruction, without the miraculous agency of the Holy Spirit, in *every particular case*, then it is, in itself, "a dead letter;" and, if the Spirit miraculously instruct *every individual*, the Bible is totally useless! Truly, this Synodical Orthodoxy is a wonderful invention; and its *second* attack, upon the plain language of our Saviour, is even more audacious than its *first*. When the Redeemer says unto his disciples, "But the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, *he shall teach you all things*"—clearly referring to the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, which were to be conferred upon the Apostles, to qualify them for the glorious work of their Ministry—the Orthodox writer daringly arrogates to himself and his party the promise of *Inspiration*, which was made for the highest purposes, *to the immediate followers of the Lord!*—I declare, when I read this undisguised perversion of the Saviour's words, to serve the interests of a sect, I felt a thrill which I cannot describe. It is only worthy of the man, who was, about two years ago, detected in quoting a *part* of text from *one* Epistle, and a *part* from *another*, and *then joining the two*, as if they had been *one verse*, in order to support a position, which each text by itself, *fully and fairly cited*, would have completely overthrown! This assumption, however, of *immediate inspiration*, is the impious jargon of the whole tribe, from "the high and puissant Doctor," down to the deluded girl of sixteen. "They are *all* taught of God," if we may credit their *own assertions!* And yet, strange to say, they are not all taught the *same lesson!* Mr. Morgan, for instance, though "he is willing to be *called* a Calvinist, does not believe all the Calvinistic doctrines:" Dr. Hanna, according to his own statement, "is a *moderate* Calvinist:"

Dr. Cooke once declared, that, "he was a Calvinist *without any moderation*," and few persons will dispute his veracity on this point at least : and it is well known, that multitudes of those called Evangelical Ministers, both in the General Synod, and other Churches, are "staunch Arminians!" But whilst their creeds are thus clashing and contradictory, they all gravely aver, that "they are taught of God," or, in other words, *inspired*. Now, can truth contradict itself? Or can the Holy Spirit really teach the Five Points of Calvinism to one set of men, and the Five opposite Points of Arminianism to another?—Which party, then, are we to believe? They are all equally *dogmatical*, equally *self-righteous*: and yet, they cannot all be *right*. "Who shall decide, when Doctors disagree?" The only uniformity amongst them, is a uniformity of presumption, or delusion; and the chief wonder is, that the people continue to be gulled and blind-led by men who separately lay claim to inspiration and infallibility, whilst no two of them are of "the same mind."

The orthodox writer, having boldly denied the right of private judgment, proceeds to assert, quite in character, that he dissents from the proposition—"that every man has a right to worship God, with sincerity, agreeably to the dictates of his own conscience, without privation, penalty, or inconvenience." Now, there is consistency, at least, if not much prudence, in this avowal. If a man have no right or power to judge, it is vain for him to talk of "conscience:" and, according to sound orthodox authority, it is highly fitting, that for worshipping God agreeably to such a *chimera* as conscience, he should be subjected to all manner of "privation, penalty, and inconvenience." This is the plain English of my orthodox friend's allegation; but he cloaks it over, as usual, with a certain set of hackneyed phrases about "the power of the church of Christ," and a dauntless perversion of the Word of God. "We maintain," saith he, "that Christians have not only a right to *refuse* to unqualified persons, admission to offices in the church, but also to *deprive* the erroneous and the ungodly of Church membership." In proof of this, he quotes Paul: "Mark them which cause *divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them.*"—"Therefore, *put away from amongst yourselves that wicked person.*" Here is "the root of the matter" the besetting

and ever-recurring sin of Synodical Orthodoxy. The false reasoning and the shameful abuse of Scripture have been a thousand times exposed, and as often repeated with unblushing hardihood.

“Unweave the web of sophistry—in vain :

“The creature’s at its dirty work again.”

They speak of the Church of Christ, as “*their Church*.” They inquire, “have they not a right to exclude unqualified persons from *their Church*? Have they not power to make laws for *their own Church*?” To these questions I fearlessly answer, that they have *no right* to make any law. They are not *law givers*, but the *executors* of the laws already *established* by the great King of the Church. They are guilty of treason, if they *admit* persons in violation of those laws; and, equally guilty, if they *exclude* persons without their sanction. Now, I challenge the entire conclave of orthodoxy, in the General Synod, to prove, that a belief in the doctrine of the Trinity, or any one of the Five Points of Calvinism, is required in the New Testament as a ground of *admission* into the Church of Christ; or, that a disbelief of any of those doctrines is stated as a ground of *exclusion*! They cannot prove it, as their constant reference to the two texts above quoted amply testifies. Those texts have no more relation to disputed *doctrines*, than they have to “the man in the moon.” They relate exclusively to *moral offences*; where men are duly qualified to judge and to punish. The doctrines mentioned in the former text are those relating to “righteousness, godliness, and new obedience;” and that *WICKED person* mentioned in the latter, is no such horrid monster as an *ARIAN*, but, according to the Apostle, simply “a fornicator, a covetous man, an idolator, a railer, a drunkard, or an extortioner.” Is it not wonderful to what arts men will stoop, to prop a falling cause, when the very Scriptures are thus “wrested to their own destruction,” and the delusion of others! That every church has a right to exclude “unqualified and ungodly persons,” I freely admit: but, according to my conception, “the unqualified,” as teachers, are the illiterate, the ignorant, the unholy—men who are not intimately acquainted with the sacred records, who are not devoted to “the Master’s cause, and who are not examples to the flock.”—The Synod of Ulster have, with an arrogant assumption

of infallibility, excluded what it is pleased to term "error," without any Scripture warrant : will "The Orthodox Presbyterian," have the goodness to inform the world, what steps have been taken, under Scripture authority, to exclude "ungodliness."

"But we learn from Scripture," says the oracle of Orthodoxy, "that this power (*i. e.* the power of exclusion and penalty) "is secured to the Church of Christ." Thus, for example, "beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God ; because, many false prophets are gone out into the world." Again, "if there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your houses, neither bid him God speed." These texts, the Orthodox modestly appropriate to *themselves* ; they *alone* are the "beloved," authorized "to try the spirits," and to detect the "false prophets ;" and, moreover, Calvinism is "THE doctrine," to which alone they are to "bid God speed." This is all very satisfactory, no doubt, to their own minds ; but the incredulous world may perhaps expect some farther proof than their *own assertion*, that *they* alone are "the Church of Christ," and that their method of "trying the spirits" is infallible. The test established by the Apostle is a very simple one. "Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ *is come in the flesh*, is of God." Would this test satisfy "the heart-probers" of the Synod ? Not at all : *their* test is far more searching ; the candidate must confess, that the supreme and eternal God came in the flesh---was born of a woman ! To say sooth, they go boldly about their work : they assume the very point in debate, as settled in their own favour ; they are "the Church of Christ," and their doctrines are the true doctrines. Whence do they derive the *power* of determining this affair ? Simply, from their *numbers* : they have the *majority* on their side, and consequently they are the true Church ! I wonder if this logic would have been equally satisfactory, had the Remonstrants been the majority, and had they passed laws of penalty and coercion ! The Church of Rome, the Church of England, and every other dominant Church, maintain *their* right to dogmatize and punish in the very same manner ; and yet, they and the General Synod all differ from each other, and mutually anathematize one another. Have they *all* a *right* to act thus ? Are they *all*, though as much opposed to each other as the four

cardinal points of the compass, true Churches of Christ ; and have they a scriptural right to inflict upon each other, "penalty, privation, and inconvenience !" If the positions supported by "The Orthodox Presbyterian" be correct, they have such a right ; and we arrive at this comfortable conclusion, that, although men *ought* to read the scriptures, and *may* "worship God agreeably to their own consciences ;" yet, their neighbours, if more numerous or more powerful, have a just right to punish them for their contumacious adherence to what, in their souls, they sincerely believe to be "the truth as it is in Jesus !" "To this complexion must we come at last." And is this Protestantism, reformed Protestantism, in the nineteenth century ? Verily, it is even so ; and to such a state of degradation, has Syodical Orthodoxy reduced the majority of Ulster Presbyterians, that they hug their chains, and kiss the very foot that has trampled their dearest privileges in the dust !

The *third resolution* of the Remonstrant Synod is found in these words :

"III.—That all exercise of Church power which attaches temporal rewards to the profession of one class of doctrines, and temporal penalties to that of any other, is contrary to the Holy Scriptures, and directly calculated to undermine that sincerity, without which, no profession of faith, or form of worship, can be acceptable unto God."

The "Orthodox Presbyterian" is a bold, subtle, and practised tactician—being accustomed to labour with unremitting zeal, like one of Milton's fallen angels, "to make the *worse* appear the *better* reason"—and yet, the resolution just cited, appears to have foiled even *his* ingenuity, and consequently to "have kindled his anger into seven-fold rage." A *direct* attack was impossible ; the language is too explicit to be misunderstood ; and the truths which it contains are too self-evident to be controverted. The only hope was in a *supposition* ; and the farther from *fact* the better. The oracle of Orthodoxy has read Shakspeare, and learned that "there is much virtue in an *if*." He, therefore, supposes, that *if* the Remonstrants *said* something which they did *not say*, and *meant* something which they *did not mean*—why, then, they were fairly caught in a dilemma. But, take his own words—"if Remonstrants tell us, that the word of God attaches no reward to the sincere belief and heart-felt profession of the truth, and no penalty to *any*

other class of doctrines, then we must at once pronounce their opinion to be a direct contradiction to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.’ What will the Remonstrants say to this? We do tell them, they have contradicted Christ, and that they should instantly repent of their rash and unscriptural assertion.” Now, I do entreat the reader to compare this orthodox fabrication, this baseless supposition, with the resolution to which it refers. Does the resolution, in its language, or by any possible inference from it, assert “that the word of God attaches no reward to the sincere belief and profession of the truth, and no penalty to *any* other class of doctrines?” Most assuredly not: it speaks not of the power or the determination of *God*, either in reward or punishment: it simply refers to “the exercise of Church power,” on the part of fallible and sinful *man*. It justly and indignantly reprobates “all exercise of *such* power, which attaches temporal rewards or penalties to the profession of certain doctrines, as contrary to the Holy Scriptures, and directly calculated to undermine that sincerity, without which no profession of faith or form of worship can be acceptable to God.” I reiterate these great and incontrovertible truths. The Word of God gives no power to man over the conscience of man—no power to inflict temporal *penalties* for either real or imaginary error—no power to make temporal *gain* a motive to the profession even of truth. On the contrary, our blessed Saviour expressly forbids men “to judge that they be not judged,” and further adds, “Neither be ye called masters; for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren.” “Let both the tares and the wheat grow together until the harvest.” “Whatsoever ye would, therefore, that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them likewise.” How would “The Orthodox Presbyterian” like a temporal penalty to be attached to the honest profession of his own immaculate faith? Did Paul inculcate the lawfulness of punishment, for opinion, when he exclaimed—“Who art *thou* that judgest another man’s servant? To his *own master* he standeth or falleth.” “Therefore, let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.” But, according to modern Orthodoxy, men may not only *judge*—they may *inflict penalties* upon

their brethren, for the free exercise of thought, and a faithful obedience to the Apostolic commandment. I tell the individual, therefore, who *fabricated* a supposition, and on his *own forgery*, audaciously accused the Remonstrants of "contradicting Jesus Christ," that he has himself *really* committed the heinous offence, which he unjustly imputed to his insulted and injured brethren.

That temporal rewards and penalties, attached to the profession of certain doctrines, "are directly calculated to undermine religious sincerity," no sane, honest man will deny. The history of all Churches, having human creeds and emoluments, amply attests the melancholy fact; and the General Synod of Ulster is, at this moment, notoriously lying under both the shame and the sin of such hollow and interested profession. Had the important principles, embodied in the Remonstrants' third resolution, been always felt, and acted upon, the Christian name would never have been disgraced by the foul stains of persecution, the statute books of Christian nations would never have been contaminated by penal enactments, and the General Synod might this day have been a united, a happy, and a Christian Church.

As the Orthodox Divine involved us, by his own fault, in the suppositious guilt of "contradicting our Saviour," it is kind in him, to call upon us, "instantly to *repent* of our (say *his*) rash and unscriptural assertion." I look upon this as "a special act of grace;" for, in calling upon us to *repent*, and admitting that we have any power to repent, he gives "the lie direct" to a venerable part of his own Theological system. Was this done by design, or did he, in his eager impatience to wound the Remonstrants, inadvertently fall upon his own sword? According to the lovely and cheering system of John Calvin, we are all *mere machines*, impelled by an irresistible power, utterly incapable of thinking one good thought, or performing one worthy action, "foredoomed, predestined to eternal wo"—and yet, his modern "immoderate" disciple, upon whom his mantle seems to have fallen, enjoins us to *repent*! What, then, have we really something to *do*, in our own salvation, after all.

—————"Can these things be,
 "And overcome us like a summer cloud,
 "Without our special wonder?"

In my next, I shall proceed with my review of "The

Orthodox Presbyterian ;” and should any of my readers conceive, that I have dwelt too minutely or too severely upon his errors, let it be understood, that I have set myself, once for all, to annihilate those absurd principles and frothy declamations, which have, for the last three years, in thousands of speeches, and pamphlets, and sermons, been unceasingly obtruded upon the Presbyterians of Ulster, as incontrovertible truths.

A REMONSTRANT.

TO THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

SIR—I have often heard reports of very extraordinary assertions being constantly made in the pulpits of those Ministers of Religion that value themselves upon their orthodoxy. For instance, it is said that a congregation in Castlereagh has been told that “Almighty God gave up the Ghost.” Such expressions as “the death of God,” —“God dying on the Cross,”—are very common now; nay, may be heard every Lord’s day. It would be well to have a record of as many of these orthodox terms of speech as can be authentically ascertained. The objects answered by this would be twofold—first, there are many who let the words of a preacher pass through their ears as through a sieve, and are insensible to that blasphemy that must offend them grievously when the printed expressions arrest their attention. The second object would be, that when the sober-minded, moderate members, of what are called Orthodox Churches, are made acquainted with the horrible mass of blasphemy that is weekly preached to them as the only true doctrine of the gospel, they may be induced to rouse themselves from their lethargy—to give over that sleepy acquiescence in the dictates of a priesthood that would not help their joy, but lord it over their consciences, their understandings, their wills, and allow them to have no more religious freedom than the slave has of civil liberty.

It is impossible that men of sense and pious feeling can let these thoughts into their minds, without being utterly disgusted. They have excited horror in all ages; and if, from the chaotic mass of religious disputes in the early times, we could select one point agreed upon by all; it is the *impassibility of God*—that God could not

suffer—could not be born---could not hunger—could not thirst—could not be exposed to cold, heat, or fatigue. We cannot say, indeed, that this opinion was unknown; but it was considered as among the worst of all heresies; and the supporters of it were called Patripassians. This notion is now without scruple, without hesitation, advanced from pulpits in this town, as the only true doctrine of the gospel; and not longer ago than the 22d of August, a sermon was preached in a meeting-house in Donegall-street, on Rom. xiii. 1, in which the following, among many similar expressions, were used: “Substituting himself for you, he (Christ) shed the blood of God.” “*The Almighty God assumed your nature, and died for you.*” “Though Jesus Christ was God, and worshipped by all worlds, yet was he despised and rejected by the people.” “*At the time he was nailed to the cross, he was worshipped, and sat on the throne of the universe, the Great, the Almighty God.*” “*Almighty God, surrounded with darkness, had not where to lay his head.*” “*Almighty God, fluttering round this globe, found not a green spot whereon to rest; all was impurity, unholiness, and shame.*” “*During thirty-three years of his (God’s) life, he was obliged to flutter round this earth, to behold the impurities and wickedness of men.*”

I trust that I am sufficiently sensible of the wickedness of profane swearing, and taking the name of God in vain, but I deliberately confess that I consider this offence more pardonable, than the use of such language with respect to the Divine Being. The common swearer may pour forth his horrifying oaths without attaching ideas to his words; but what shall we say of a minister of religion, all whose powers should be employed in storing his mind with thoughts and sentiments, most useful for those whom he is to instruct, after solemn meditation and prayer, pouring forth, as the glad tidings of salvation, such horrible pollutions. I cannot conceive how there could be a single person present that could hear these words without a thrill of horror shaking his whole frame. Christianity has at all times been able triumphantly to repel the attacks of its ablest enemies, but how it is to hold its ground against such friends, I see not. All the real friends of religion, those who wish the Gospel to prevail as a rule of life, as an actuating principle, as able to furnish us thoroughly with every

thing that will be acceptable to God, as the only effectual antidote to licentious manners and unprincipled conduct, should stand forth, should raise their voices against such preaching as will make more infidels than a million of Paynes, Carlises, and Taylors. It is true that in no religious reformation has the work ever been begun by the laity, that they have been always supine and indolent, willing to take every thing upon trust, and the more galling the chains that the priesthood have fastened upon them, the more contented or at least the more passive they have been. I hope that others of your correspondents will communicate such instances of orthodox preaching as may come under their notice.

Belfast, Aug. 25, 1830.

V. D. M.

P. S.—I am afraid “H’s.” lucubrations are becoming too profound for me. If I was to be “overwhelmed” by his maintaining that *giving* and *committing* are no proofs of *delegation* of power; but, “on the contrary decisive against such a supposition;” what must I be, but sunk to a depth still “lower than the lowest,” when I find that He who received the power, was, at the same time the giver, and that he who delivered it up, was himself, at the same time, the receiver—yea, “did deliver it up to himself.” This was for a long time a puzzle for all Trinitarian writers, and different have been their solutions; but “H.” has boldly cut the knot and “overwhelmed” us with amazement at his sublime discovery. But, further, the assertion of the Apostle Paul, that Christ gave himself for his Church, that he might render it a glorious church, (Ephes. v. 25. 26. 27.) and Jude’s saying, “that God is able to present us faultless before the throne of his glory,” are the Scripture proofs of Christ giving all his power to himself, and again delivering it all up to himself. Truly “The Orthodox Presbyterian” has great reason to plume himself on “the willingness and *boldness*” with which he has come forth to “the help of the Lord against the mighty,” in his most magnanimous, disinterested, and uninteresting publication.

After this sublime discovery of Christ’s receiving from himself all his own power and delivering it to himself again, nay, further, that he was seen, by Daniel, in the “very act of receiving universal and everlasting dominion” from his own hands, “or in other words, the surrender of almighty power into his [own] hands:” we

are fully prepared for solving another difficulty, and are at no loss how to account for Christ being called a Son, a Child, and a Father in the same sentence. Accordingly "H." informs us that "the words, the child born, the son given, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, could be spoken of none but of the Lord Jesus Christ," nor are we to be any more staggered at immensity being increased, or infinity being added to; as in the case of this "Son and Father," of the *increase* of whose government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom.

ABUSE OF SCRIPTURE,

IN

"THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN."

IN an article on "the Trinity," in the July number of "The Orthodox Presbyterian," page 345, and signed "Beta," there are great liberties taken with the word of God. The writer, though he afterwards attacks Anti-Trinitarians, commences his essay, in terms to which every Anti-Trinitarian assents. "To Revelation," he says, "mankind are indebted wholly and exclusively for that knowledge of God, which is 'able to make us wise unto salvation.'" This is very well; but the author, like his other Calvinistic friends, has afterwards adopted a phraseology no where to be found in Revelation, and has put an interpretation on selected passages of Revelation, which he dare not admit in others. Where in the Bible does he find *trinity*, *triune nature*, *God the Son*, *God the Holy Ghost*, *these three are one in nature*, *three in personality*, *my Father and I are one God*, *God—man—three persons in the Godhead*,—*two natures*? After using a number of these phrases, he asks, with an air of triumph, "shall we reject the plain declarations of God as a cunningly devised fable?" The truth is, "the plain declarations of God" are all on the other side, of which we could produce one thousand examples; but the assertions of "Beta" will not pass with us as Scripture. We do not ask "*how* the universe was formed out of nothing," we receive the *fact* as recorded; nor do we ask "Beta," *how* there can be three persons in the Godhead, or *how* the Father is God,

the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and all three but one God; but we simply ask, where is the *fact* stated in Revelation—point to the chapter and verse, and we humbly bow to the communication.

After putting certain phrases into the mouths of Anti-Trinitarians, he jeeringly makes them say, "Arians and Socinians can describe the nature of God more clearly and explicitly than he himself has been able reveal in the Bible." If he had said, Anti-Trinitarians are so much afraid of being wise beyond what is written, that they reject all human authority in matters of faith, and cling with constancy to the words of the Bible, and the Bible only, he would have done them no more than justice. When the Bible says, "Father, this is life eternal, that they might know thee the ONLY TRUE GOD, and Jesus Christ whom THOU hast sent," Anti-Trinitarians cannot be changed by the popular expressions of "Beta," borrowed from Calvinistic and Roman Catholic manuals.

The particular passage of scripture, which he quotes to bear him out in his assertions, and on which he lays great stress, is 2 Cor. xiii. 14. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all." This benediction, or devout wish, if viewed as "prayer," will prove too much, even for "Beta" himself. In 1 Cor. xvi. 23, 24, the Apostle wishes "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. MY LOVE (*adds the Apostle*) be with you all in Christ Jesus." Earnest wishes and acts of prayer should not be confounded. We may innocently *wish* that a person in power may grant an office to a friend, or confer on him certain *gifts*—to *ask* for which, if the person were *present*, might be proper—but to *pray* to him for it, when he is *absent*, with an expectation that he would hear and grant the request, would be idolatry. Paul, and the other sacred writers, commonly begin and end their epistles with earnest *wishes* for evangelical blessings from God and Christ, upon those, to whom their letters were addressed. These cannot be regarded as acts of worship, without the most dangerous consequences. One quotation from the beginning of the book of Revelation, will prove the truth of this observation. "Grace be to you, and peace from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the *seven spirits* who are before his

throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth." Here the very same language is applied to God, the seven spirits, and Jesus Christ, and is similar to that used in the passage selected by "Beta;" and whatever interpretation he forces upon the one, he is bound to allow it to be applied to the other. His, as given in "The Orthodox Presbyterian," leads to the *worship of the seven spirits*, and consequently to idolatry.

Towards the end of his essay, speaking of the *defects* of his favourite passage, to prove the doctrine of the Trinity, and anxious to *supply* these defects from other portions of the sacred volume, he goes on to assert:—"Jesus Christ is called Jehovah, our righteousness."—Jer. xxxiii. 16. "Jehovah of Hosts."—Isai. xlv. 6. "God."—John i. 1. "Mighty God."—Isai. ix. 6. "God over all, blessed for ever."—Rom. ix. 5.

It is more than remarkable, that Jesus Christ is not named in any of the above passages, with the exception of the last, which, according to the most obvious grammatical construction, should be rendered, "of whom was the Christ, according to the flesh: God, who is over all, be blessed for ever."

If "Beta" will have a *child* which was to be born—a *son* which was to be given, to be *Jehovah*, because his *name should be called Jehovah*,—then it will unavoidably follow, that a *place* is *Jehovah*, "for *Abraham called the name of the place* (where he found the ram caught in the thicket,) *Jehovah-jireh*."—Gen. xxii. 11. *That an altar* is *Jehovah*, for "*Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi*."—Ex. xvii. 15:—That Gideon's *altar* is *Jehovah*, for "*Gideon built an altar, and called it Jehovah-shalem*."—Judges vi. 24. "Beta," by some mystical law of interpretation, and by an abuse of plain language, applies the term *Jehovah*, in Jer. xxxiii. 16, as already cited, to Jesus Christ, though the Prophet is speaking of *Jerusalem*. "And Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, the Lord (*Jehovah*) our righteousness."

Jesus Christ, of whom "Beta" would have us believe whatever he wishes, says, Rev. iii. 12. "Him that overcometh—I will write upon him the name of MY GOD."

ALPHA.

Intelligenee.

WE hail, with feelings of great delight, the appearance of the last number of "The Orthodox Presbyterian," and more particularly and especially do we recommend an attentive perusal of its leading article, to all sects and denominations of people. Verily it is a precious document, and answers our purpose "passing well." We were informed some time ago, "by a Native Swiss," that a gentleman, well known for his *enthusiastic orthodoxy*, but who is in the habit of keeping "good company," declared, that "The Orthodox Presbyterian" has done, and is doing material injury, to the cause it has undertaken to "advocate"—we anticipate no change in his opinions, on reading No. XI. of that recondite publication. It talks much of feasting, and is itself a feast. It is evident, that the Rev. writer felt as if he had eaten "sour grapes," and that his teeth were "set on edge," by the late proceedings at Derryboy and Greyabbey. To be serious: the article in question intimates an exhausted brain and an empty portfolio; or a very firm reliance on the gullibility of its readers. Notwithstanding, however, all that the Rev. writer has said on the subject, we do inform our friends with pleasure, that on the 5th August, a dinner was given to the Remonstrant Ministers at Greyabbey—that Wm. Montgomery, of Rosemount, Esq. who had been cajoled, and imposed on, and duped by "Orthodox Presbyterians," presided on the occasion—that 217 respectable persons sat down to a very elegant entertainment, and that the evening passed away in innocent gaiety and temperate cheerfulness. We add, moreover, that we approve of those meetings, because we think that they have a tendency to suppress the bad, and to cherish the good feelings of human nature, and that amidst such scenes, the heart is often expanded with a more glowing benevolence and a holier charity.

REBELLION IN THE GENERAL SYNOD OF ULSTER.

The flame of Revolution has spread from France to the County of Donegall! The Presbytery of Letterkenny, last week, ordained the Rev. Mr. Anderson to the pastoral charge of the Congregation of Ramullan, *in direct defiance of the celebrated Overtures of 1828.*—He had been examined by the "Heart-probing Committee," and found wanting—but whether in orthodoxy or other qualifications, we cannot pretend to say. The PEOPLE, however, "insisted on having the man of their choice," and the Presbytery "hearkened unto their words"! What will the *Autocrat* of the Synod say to this? By his own law, the ordination is null and void"! Will he dare to enforce it? We prophesy that he will not! The Presbytery of Derry, we have heard, is likely to commit a similar overt act of treason; and the Great Presbytery of Route is said to be also up in arms! So, then, it appears that *chains* for their heretical *brethren* are very good things in orthodox estimation, but not quite so agreeable when applied to their own Calvinistic limbs!

WARRENPOINT CONGREGATION.

We are happy, for peace' sake, to find that an amicable settlement or at least suspension of differences, was agreed to at the late Down Assizes, between the parties at issue in the Congregation of Warrenpoint. The parties to the arrangement were Mr. Little and his Counsel Mr. Scriven, on behalf of the traversers; and Mr. Montgomery of Comber, and Counsellors Moody and Nelson, on the part of Mr. Arnold. The arrangement itself was the same as that acceded to by Mr. Arnold, in reply to a proposal made by Mr. Finlay, Moderator of Dromore Presbytery. It was agreed to postpone all criminal proceedings till next Assizes, on condition that the Session case should also be postponed *till after* that time, and that the party should be bound not to disturb Mr. Arnold or his Congregation, in the meantime, by any attempt to introduce preachers, similar to those for the introduction of whom they were to have been prosecuted; but that they might assert, by some civil proceeding, any title to property in the house which they may conceive themselves to possess.— In a conversation between the Agents and Counsels for the two parties, this was agreed to be the fairest and most satisfactory way for all parties, in which the business could be arranged. Accordingly, Mr. Scriven, on the part and in the presence of all, applied to the Judge to respite the recognizances till next Assizes, which notice his Lordship at once approved and granted. Thus the honour both of the traversers and of their law agents, is pledged against giving any interruption or disturbance, and Mr. Arnold and his friends show their willingness to promote peace, by refraining, while in their power, from prosecution or punishment.

CRUMLIN CONGREGATION.

To the Editor of The Guardian.

SIR—"The Orthodox Presbyterian," copied by you, states, that "Crumlin Congregation having given over its Orthodox members to the new and flourishing Congregation of Dundrod, the small remnant of Arians have entirely gone over to the Remonstrants.

Now, as it was the draft off Crumlin that originated, and chiefly constituted, the new Congregation of Dundrod, if I understand the above sentence aright, we have here the double anomaly of a small remnant or *minority* having handed over the *majority* to a new congregation *before* that new congregation existed.

When I was ordained in this congregation, above 30 years since, I had not more than 150 families under my care. In a few years, the number amounted to more than 200. But as many of these lived at 4, 5, or 6 miles distance from Crumlin, and, of course, could not attend public worship regularly, I frequently urged them to build a new meeting-house. Having at last persuaded them to do so, I contributed my mite (7*l.*) to the building, though I knew I must thereby lose 40 or 50 families. These, then, were given over (shall I say by me?) to the formation of a new congregation. But there

was no selection of orthodox or heterodox members ; the people (with the exception of a few families that would not, even at my request, leave me,) went to the nearest place of worship. All this occurred *before* a division took place in the Synod, and without any distinction of New or Old Light. The Orthodox Presbyterian's statement, then, regarding the Orthodox Members having been given over, is untrue. It is also untrue that the small remnant of Arians have *entirely* gone over to the Remonstrants; for I believe I have lost four families in consequence of our separation from the Synod. It is also untrue that those members that approve of my instructions regarding the Christian duties and the perfect unity of the Godhead, are a small remnant. My congregation has increased so much during the last three years as to make up the loss of the 59 families that have gone to Dundrod, the number of families now under my care being 200 ; and I have no doubt of their increase.

It is only a few hours since I saw your Paper, else I should have corrected the errors of the Orthodox Presbyterian sooner.

I am, &c.

N. ALEXANDER.

Crumlin, 5th July, 1830.

CLERICAL ZEAL IN A GOOD CAUSE.—A certain Clergyman, of popular talents, high evangelical principles, and undoubted loyalty, on hearing that his favourite candidate had been elected for a northern county, mounted the top of a public vehicle ; and, while his venerable *father* led the horse through all the streets of a populous town, he manfully stood up, waving a flag in one hand, and his hat in the other, shouting with stentorian lungs, to the delighted mob which accompanied his progress. We lament much that the arithmetician of the " Orthodox Presbyterian" was not present, otherwise we could have got an exact account of the " hurras," which the worthy parson vociferated on that important occasion.

Correspondents.

Our correspondent, Mnason, will find most satisfactory information on the subject of his letter, in a valuable tract, entitled " Three Important Questions answered, relating to the Christian Name, Character, and Hopes, by the Rev. Henry Ware, of Boston," which can be had at the Publisher's.

Several articles have arrived, but too late for insertion in the present Number. We again request our correspondents to forward their communications earlier in the month, that we may have time to give them proper attention.

" Discipulus" came too late to obtain his object in this Number.

THE
Bible Christian.

No. IX.

OCTOBER, 1830.

VOL. I.

A REVIEW OF SOME MODERN SYNODS.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 356.)

PRESBYTERIAN MINISTERS IN CONVOCATION.

THE last article in this series, treated of Irish Convocations; and in the account of the Convocation of 1634, it was mentioned, that some of the Scotch Ministers, who had settled in Ulster, had been members of that assembly. In what capacity they sat in it, whether as conformists to Episcopacy, or retaining their Presbyterian principles, is a question of some interest, even to the present generation. As it bears some relation to my general subject, I shall make the consideration of it the business of this paper.

The following article appeared in "The Warder," Sept. 14, 1822; and I believe has never been noticed by any Presbyterian writer. It is evidently the composition of some well-informed man, who had access to authentic documents, and is written with fairness and moderation. The conclusion which he comes to, is, that all the Presbyterian Ministers, who were inducted into benefices, submitted to Episcopal ordination. I shall insert this publication at large, as it contains some original information, and other particulars, not generally known; and I shall subjoin my own observations in the form of notes:—

"SIR—In a provincial paper of the 23d inst. are the following observations:—

"After the period of the settlement of Ulster, the Presbyterian Clergy of this province participated in the tithes, officiated in some of the Churches, and were consulted by various Prelates of the Established Church, about affairs of common concernment to Protestantism. In 1634, some of them were members of a Convocation then held—Primate Usher, the first scholar in Europe, patronised the Presbyterians of Ulster, and the learned

Bishop Bramhall, (*a*) and other Prelates, used a particular form for admitting them into their benefices, and enabling them to receive their tithes, which was perfectly consistent with their views of Church discipline. But the steady loyalty and unshaken adherence of the Synod of Ulster to Charles the First, induced 'the Commonwealth to strip them of their *livings*; and though they afterwards received grants from Charles the Second, William and Mary, George the First, &c. yet they never obtained any thing like a *fair compensation* for the Church property and influence, of which they had been unjustly deprived.'

"The writer does not specify the names of any of these Clergy, who are stated to have thus enjoyed tithes in Ulster; but several of them are to be found in a quarto volume, published in Dublin, in the year 1713, under the title of 'Presbyterian Loyalty Asserted;' among these, we find the Rev. Messrs. James Hamilton, Minister of Ballywalter, in the county of Down; John Ridge, of Antrim; Henry Calvert, patronised by the Clotworthys of Antrim; Robert Blair, of Bangor; Robert Cunningham, Holywood, in the same county; and John Livingston, of Killinchy, also in the county of Down.

"Now, it appears by a Regal Visitation Book of Down and Connor, anno 1633, deposited among the Records of his Majesty's Court of Prerogative in Dublin, that the foregoing persons were regularly ordained by Bishops of the Church of England, before they were permitted to 'participate in the tithes.'—The following are extracts from an attested copy of this book:—

"*Jacobus Hamilton*, A.M. admissus fuit ad sacr. Diacon. ord. per Robt. Dun. et Con. Essum 22 Nov. 1625. Et admissus fuit ad sa pres. ord. per eundem Essum 2 Oct. 1626. Idem admissus fuit per eundem Essum ad vicariam de (1) Whitechurch, als. Templefyn, Dun. 3 Martii 1626, super presenm. Jacob. Vic. Doms. Claneboye ejusd. Vic. Patr. Idem Jacobus inductus fuit in eandem vicariam 6. Martii 1626. *Johs. Ridge*, adm. fuit ad sacr. Diac. ord. per Joh. Okoned Essum 8 Mar. 1611. Et adm.

(1) In another part of this record, this Vicarage is denominated "Ballywalter, also Whitechurch."

fuit ad sacr. Presb. ord. per eund. Essum 7 Junii 1612. Id. Johs. adm. fuit per Robt. Dun, et Con. Essum ad vic de Antrym Con. Dioc. 7 Julii an Dom. 1619, super presentm. Arthuri Dom Chichester ejusd. vic. Patrs. Id. induct. fuit in vic. 10 Julii 1619. *Henricus Calvert*, A.M. adm. fuit ad sacr. tam. Diac. quam Presb. ord. per Andriam Rapoten Essum 4 Marii 1629. Id. Hen. adm. fuit per Robt. Dun, et Con. Essum ad vic de Muckomer, Con. Dioc. 17 Junii 1650, super presentationem Rogr. Langford armig. ejusd. vic. Patr. *Robtus Blair* adm. fuit ad sac. Diac. et Presb. ord. per Robt. Dun, et Con. Essum 10 Julii 1623. *Robtus. Cunyngham*, A.M. adm. fuit ad sacr. Diac. ord. per Robt Dun, et Con. Essum 9 Nov. 1615. *Joh. Liviestowns*, A.M. adm. fuit ad sacr. tam Diac. quam Presb. ord. per Andriam Rapot. Ess. 29 Aug. 1630.”(b)

“ This book also contains a list of several others episcopally ordained, whose names, being of Scottish origin, it is not unreasonable to suppose, that they were of the number of those asserted to have possessed tithes as Presbyterian Clergy, after the period of the settlement of Ulster, viz. James Fergusson, Robert Macneille, John Melville, Patrick Tullis, John Echlin, Andrew Thompson, William Wallis, Patrick Kerr, Alexander Forvesson, Robert Dunbarr, Andrew Monypenny, Hugh Nivene, Lawrence Thompson, John Kinean, Walter Lawmond, John Lowthian, &c. &c. These were ordained by Robert Echlin, Bishop of Down and Connor.

“ No traces of compliance with the scruples of Scotch Ministers applying for orders, are to be found in this authentic document.”(c)

“ By the Irish Act of Uniformity, 2 Eliz. c. 2. provision is made, that no other form of ordination shall be used in the Church of Ireland but what is contained in the book of Common Prayer; neither shall any liturgy be used by Ministers, except the liturgy of that book, on pain of forfeiting, for the first offence, one year's profit of the offender's benefice, with six months' imprisonment; for the second offence, deprivation of benefice, with a year's imprisonment; for the third, imprisonment for life; if not beneficed, the party convicted, shall, for the first offence, be imprisoned a year; for the second, during life.—‘ And for the due execution thereof, the Queen's Majesty, the Lords temporal, and Commons, do, in God's

name, earnestly require and charge all Archbishops, and other ordinaries, that they shall endeavour to their utmost to put the same into execution, as they will answer before God for such evils and plagues wherewith Almighty God may justly punish his people for neglecting their good and wholesome laws.' This continued to be the law of the land till the Act 17 and 18 Car. II. when it was further ratified and enforced by the injunction of reading assent and consent.

"In 1608, King James formed the project for the division and plantation of the escheated lands in six several counties of Ulster; previous to the execution of which, in the year following, her [his] Majesty was pleased to publish *orders and conditions to be observed by the planters of Ulster*, reprinted in Harris's *Hibernica*, p. 123.—The sixth article is in these words:—'Every of the said undertakers, English and Scotch, before the ensembling of his letters patent, shall take the *oath of supremacy*, either in the Chancery of England, or before the commissioners to be appointed for the establishing of the plantation; and shall also conform themselves IN RELIGION according to his Majesty's laws.' So far also was the King from any intention of receding from this article, that in November, 1618, a commission passed the Great Seal of Ireland, appointing Captain Nicholas Pynnar, and others, to view and survey the new plantation, and to certify, among other particulars, how many of the planters had taken the oath of supremacy; an oath which, it is well known, a strict Presbyterian could never be brought to digest. (d) Of the heads of families, whom Captain Pynnar's report states to have taken or omitted the oath of supremacy, it will be found that more than two-thirds had conformed, and many of the residue had only deferred the ceremony, till they had taken out the leases. Churches were built, at the time of this survey, in several districts of the plantation, and handsome glebes had, by the pious munificence of King James, been set out for the Clergy.

"Should any Presbyterian Ministers, therefore, have gotten possession of benefices belonging to the Church of England, contrary to the *act of uniformity*, and the ecclesiastical canons, they could not with any colour of truth

complain of injustice, if the (2) legislature cast them out, by insisting on a full compliance with the laws of the land. Neither did they complain—for one of these Ministers, Mr. Patrick Adair, who lived to see the Revolution, joined with Colonel Arthur Upton and the Rev. John Abernethy, in presenting a petition to King William, in behalf of the Presbyterian Clergy of Ulster, reduced to insupportable straits by the late troubles; in which petition, not a word is said of their having lost their livings by any injustice, but a share is asked of the public charitable collections, and some provision requested to be made for their future competent support, ‘till the peace and quiet of these parts of that despoiled and impoverished nation enable the inhabitants to maintain the said Ministers in such a way as his Majesty in his great wisdom shall find just.’—Presb. Loy. part 2, p. 406. And in the same work, we find a declaration from the Synod at Belfast, dated July 3, 1690, on occasion of the disturbances, given by their brethren to the Established Clergy, wherein they ‘earnestly advise all the several meetings and brethren to abstain from using the Churches, by law belonging to the Prelatical Clergy, and from every such thing or practice, whereby reflection may be *justly cast upon their way*, as invaders of the law, or right of any subject.’ (e) “D. S.

“August 28, 1822.”

NOTES.

(a) This, I apprehend, is a mistake, in regard to Bishop Bramhall. In 1736, the Bishop of Down held a visitation at Belfast, assisted by Bramhall, Bishop of Derry, at which five Dissenting Ministers, viz. Mr. Edward Brice, Mr. John Ridge, Mr. Hen. Calvert, and Mr. Robert Cunningham, were cited to appear, and required to subscribe the canons made by the Convocation of 1634. They all refused. After a conference, in the presence of a great confluence of nobility, gentry, clergy, and others, for two days, sentence of deposition was pronounced against them, Aug. 12, 1636.

(2) Dr. Campbell, Presbyterian Minister of Armagh, in his “Examination of the Bishop of Cloyne’s Defence of his Principles,” published in 1788, states that the Church benefices “were taken from the Presbyterian Ministers by Cromwell”—that “at the Restoration, they were not restored to them”—“that several laws were passed”—and that “the usurpations of the Episcopal Clergy were confirmed.”

After the Restoration, "the Bishops fell with all haste to crush faithful Ministers, and plant the Churches with whom they could get. Three of them in the north were singularly fitted for that design. Old Bramble [so Bramhall was commonly called] made Bishop of Armagh, and Primate of Ireland, who, though then only Bishop of Derry, had been the principal persecutor of Non-Conformists, before the rebellion, so his power reached now not only to his own dioceses, where divers godly Ministers had been placed, but all Ireland besides." *Adair M. S.*—The other two were Jeremy Taylor and Lesley, first of Dromore, then of Derry, "son to old Lesley of Down, who had deposed divers worthy Ministers before the rebellion." "There were not three such in Ireland." The accommodating Prelates were Echlin, of Down, and Knox, of Raphoe.

(b) *Translation.* James Hamilton, A.M. was admitted to Deacon's orders, by Rob. Bishop of Down and Connor, 22d Nov. 1625, and to Priest's orders, by the same Bishop, 2d Oct. 1626. The same was admitted, by the same Bishop, to the Vicarage of Whitechurch, alias, Templefyn, Down, 3d March, 1626, on the presentation of James, Viscount Lord Claneboy, patron of said vicarage. The same James was inducted into the same vicarage, 6th March, 1626. John Ridge was admitted to Deacon's orders, by Joh. Okenhed, Bishop, 8th March, 1611. [This must be a mistake of the transcriber, or printer, probably for Oxon or Oxoniæ: Mr. Ridge was an English Puritan, and may have been ordained in England, by the Bishop of Oxford, in 1611 and 1612.] He was admitted to Priest's orders, by the same Bishop, 7th June, 1612. The same John was admitted, by Rob. Bishop of Down and Connor, to the Vicarage of Antrim, diocese of Connor, 7th July, 1619, on the presentation of Arthur, Lord Chichester, patron of said Vicarage. The same was inducted into the Vicarage, 10th July, 1619. Henry Calvert, A. M. was admitted to Deacon's and Priest's orders, by Andrew Bishop of Raphoe, 4 March, 1629. The same Henry was admitted, by Rob. Bishop of Down and Connor, to the Vicarage of Muckamore, diocese of Connor, 17th July, 1630, on the presentation of Roger Langford, Esquire, patron of the same Vicarage. Robert Blair was admitted to Deacon's and Priest's orders, by Rob. Bishop of Down and Connor, 10th July, 1623. Robert Cunningham, A. M. was admitted to Deacon's orders, by Rob. Bishop of Down and Connor, 9th Nov. 1615. John Livingston, A.M. was admitted to Deacon's and Priest's orders, by Andrew, Bishop of Raphoe, 29th Aug. 1630. [He was settled in Killinchy.]

Lord Claneboy was son of a Presbyterian Minister in Scotland. He and a Mr. Fullerton came over to Ireland before the accession of James to the English crown, and, as is said, at his suggestion, to watch over his interest in Ireland. He became a Fellow of Dublin College, and is reported to have had Usher for a pupil. He afterwards was created Lord Claneboy, by James I. James Hamilton was his nephew, and is said to have sat in the Convocation of 1634.

(c) The following paragraph contains sufficient reasons, why 'no traces of compliance with the scruples of Scotch Ministers applying for orders are to be found in this authentic document.' Such a re-

turn would have been directly contrary to law ; beside those imaginary ' evils and plagues wherewith Almighty God might justly punish his people, for neglecting such good and wholesome laws.'

" This is acknowledged, and the contrary is no where asserted.—How the laws then stood, is perfectly well known. But the question here, is concerning historical fact. Did the Presbyterian Ministers, or did they not, enjoy the Church benefices, however the laws of this kingdom then stood? The fact is undoubted. History shews us that our Ministers were inducted into the Churches, with the approbation and concurrence of the Bishops.

" The Bishop being acknowledged a Presbyter, and as such to have power of ordination, in conjunction with other Presbyters, proposed to join with them in ordaining : and that all those things which were scrupled at, in the established form, should be laid aside, and the exceptionable expressions exchanged for others, to be concerted with the consent and approbation of the Minister to be ordained.—This proposal being consented to, he was ordained publicly in the Church, in the manner agreed upon, finding nothing in it repugnant to his principles : and hoping that this might happily contribute to the union of Protestants, and to the strengthening the plantation of Ulster. And we may suppose, as a matter of course, that the names of the Ministers thus ordained and inducted, were entered into the Bishop's roll.

" This was not done by act of parliament, but, as I have said, by encouragement of government. Lord Chichester, then Lord Deputy of Ireland, being educated a Puritan, by Cartwright, gave them great encouragement : finding it for the interest of the crown and kingdom. And they did ' enjoy the Church benefices, without renouncing their own Church principles,' and continued to enjoy them, though they remained Presbyterian still, and used not the liturgy, till at length they were taken from them by Cromwell. At the Restoration, they were not restored to their benefices—these were intercepted by the Episcopal Clergy, who were not ashamed to continue the oppression of Cromwell against our fathers. The Primacy was filled by a bigotted high-churchman, Bramhall—severe laws were passed—the usurpations of the Episcopal Clergy were confirmed, and they have continued to enjoy those livings which Presbyterian Ministers had held from their first settlement in this kingdom, till they were ejected by Cromwell.

" The Presbyterian Ministers did openly acknowledge, and propose their difficulties, and the Bishops, by their condescension, full of liberality, removed them ; and thereby enabled them, in perfect consistency of principle, to be inducted into the Churches."—*Campbell.*

This transaction is related with great simplicity in the Adair Manuscript : " My Lord Claneboy procured Mr. Blair's admission to the Ministry, having before, at his desire, informed the Bishop of his settled principles against conformity ; and, likewise, Mr Blair fearing he had not been plain enough with the Bishop, declared the same to the Bishop at their first meeting. Notwithstanding, the Bishop declared himself most willing he should be planted there, saying, he had heard good of him, and would impose no conditions

upon him. Himself was old, and could teach him ceremonies, and Mr. Blair would teach him substances, only he must ordain him; otherwise, neither of them could answer the Law, nor brook the Land. Mr. Blair told him that was contrary to his principles; to which he replied wittily and submissively, "whatever you account of Episcopacy, yet I know you account a Presbyter to have divine warrant. Will you receive ordination from Mr. Cunningham and the adjacent brethren, and let me come in among them, in no other relation than a Presbyter? This Mr. Blair would not refuse, and so the matter was carried." He was accordingly inducted into the parish of Bangor, by Robert Echlin, Bishop of Down and Connor. "Those of the same persuasion were ordained in Ireland between 1622 and 1642, in the same manner, and particularly Mr. John Livingston, who has left a full narrative of his conference with Knox, Bishop of Raphoe, who joined with the Presbyterian Ministers in his ordination."—*Presbyterian Loyalty*.

The narrative of Mr. Livingston's ordination is too interesting and important to be omitted, and is as follows:—"My Lord Clanboy sent some with me, and wrote to Mr. Andrew Knox, Bishop of Raphoe, who, when I came and delivered the letters from my Lord Clanboy and from the Earl of Wigtown, and some others, that I had for that purpose brought from Scotland, told me he knew my errand; that I came to him because I had scruples about Episcopacy and ceremonies, according as Mr. Josias Welsh and some others had done; and that he thought his old age was prolonged for little other purpose but to do such offices;—that if I scrupled to call him my Lord, he cared not much for it; all he would desire of me, because they got there but few sermons, that I would preach at Ramallen the first Sabbath; and that I would send for Mr. Cunningham, and two or three other neighbouring Ministers to be present, who, after sermon, should give me imposition of hands; but although they performed the work, he behoved to be present; and although he durst not answer it to the state, he gave me the book of ordination, and desired that any thing that I scrupled at I should draw a line over it on the margin, and that Mr. Cunningham should not read it; but I found that it had been so marked by some others before, that I needed not mark any thing; so the Lord was pleased to carry that business far beyond any thing that I had thought or almost ever desired."—*Livingston's Life of himself*.

The virulent antipathy of the Scottish to Episcopacy is not only known to every one acquainted with the history of those times; but of late, even to the readers of novels: so that no one can deem it credible, that the fathers of our Presbyterian Church would fly from the Bishops in Scotland, to conform to those of Ireland; or that the people, who followed them, would, in such case, adhere to their ministry. Without detracting from the liberality of those Prelates, who accommodated them, as to forms and ceremonies, I may say, that they could not have dispensed with the services of these Ministers; for none others could be had. The Conforming Clergy in England could not be prevailed on to quit their comfortable livings, to encounter the dangers, hardships, and privations of an Irish mis-

sion : and if they had, they would have found none but Scotch Presbyterians, or English Puritans, to administer to ; and few of either description, in a country desolated by civil wars. The Bishops themselves had no reason to rejoice in their preferment. “ So far (says Leland) had the estates of the northern bishopricks been embarrassed, both by the usurpations of the Irish Lords and the claims of patentees, that they scarcely afforded a competent, much less an honourable provision, for men of worth and learning ; while the state of the parochial Clergy was still more deplorable. Most of the northern Churches had either been destroyed, in the late wars, or fallen to ruin : the benefices were small, and either shamefully kept by the Bishops, in the way of commendam or sequestration ; or filled with Ministers as scandalous as their income. The wretched flock was totally abandoned ; and, for many years, divine service had not been used in any parish Church in Ulster, except in cities and great towns.” “ Bishops (says Neal, ann. 1613) were nominated to the Popish dioceses ; but their revenues being alienated, or in the hands of Papists, or very much diminished by the wars, they were obliged to throw the revenues of several bishopricks into one. The case was the same with the inferior Clergy, 40s. a-year being a common allowance for a Vicar in Connaught, and sometimes but 16s.” “ Thus (says Mr. Collier) the authority of the Bishops went off, and the people followed their own fancies in the choice of religion.” In this state of things, the services of the Presbyterian Ministers were indispensable and invaluable.

(d) Presbyterians, and other Dissenters, do not object to the oath of supremacy ; nor did they make any application to be exempt from it, either on the repeal of the corporation and test acts, or the passing of the relief bill. Nor is there any reason why they should. The purport and intention of the oath, is only to disavow the right of the Pope to exercise authority in the British dominions. This is not a partial interpretation to escape a difficulty, or quiet a scruple. It is expressly declared to be the sense of it by Queen Elizabeth, in her injunctions of 1558—“ All she challenged, was that which had, at all times, belonged to the imperial Crown of England, that she had the sovereignty and rule over all manner of persons under God, so that no *foreign power* had any rule over them.”—(Burnet’s Hist. of the Reformation of the Church of England, 2d part.)

“ The whole body of the Papists, (says Neal) refused the oath of supremacy, as inconsistent with their allegiance to the Pope ; but the Puritans took it, with the Queen’s explication in her injunctions.” The act of assurance, in 1562, speaks the same language, inflicting penalties only on “ all persons who maintained the Pope’s authority within the realm.” In 1605, the Puritans issued “ a protestation of the King’s supremacy ;” in which they declare, that “ they hold and maintain the King’s supremacy in all causes, and over all persons, civil and ecclesiastical, as it was granted to Queen Elizabeth, and explained in the book of injunctions.” The law does not consider our Churches as ecclesiastical bodies, nor our Ministers as spiritual persons.

While the Puritans remained in the Church, they had some scruples on this point; but when they became Nonconformists and Dissenters, there was no reason for any, because the act of supremacy regarded only the administration of the Church. They had no more to do with the government of the Episcopal Church, by a King or a Queen, whether styled *head*, as Henry VIII., or *governor*, as Queen Elizabeth, than with any other abuse that prevails in the Establishment. The Church of England is a spiritual corporation, incorporated by act of Parliament. The King is its head; but Christ is the *head* of his Church and our Churches. (Eph. i. 22; iv. 15—Col. i. 18; xi. 19.) The hierarchy and parochial clergy are officers of this corporate body, appointed to read certain prayers and no other, and to preach thirty-nine doctrines, and none different from them, and to perform a variety of civil duties. Instead of being in alliance with the state, the Church is only ministerial to it. Parochial Clergy, however, are Ministers, though in bonds; but no one contends that Archbishops, Deans, Archdeacons, Canons, Prebendaries, Chancellors, Judges, &c. of metropolitan, Prerogative and Consistorial Courts, *et hoc genus omne*, bear any relation to the Church of Christ, except so far as they are Presbyters, and, as such, on a level with parish Ministers, whether Episcopal or Presbyterian. There is, indeed, a controversy concerning diocesan Bishops, and their succession, from the Apostles; but in our opinion, their office derives no authority from Scripture; and their succession is a mere chimera, except so far as all Presbyters have succeeded the Apostles. "The liturgy, also, with the form of making, ordaining, and consecrating of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons," and all the Canons, except those of 1640, which have no parliamentary sanction, is an appendage to the act of uniformity. This constitution has placed the Church of England, now the United Church of England and Ireland, in a singular position. She owns the Church of Rome to be a true Church, and derives from her the validity of her orders and ordinances, and her forms of worship, but Rome disowns her as schismatical and heretical. She will hold no communion with the foreign Churches in Europe and America; and they consider her as imperfectly reformed, and still inclined to Popery. Thus she sits solitary and insulated in the midst of Christendom: excommunicated by Rome, disowning all Protestants; deserted in her own country by a large portion of her population; and composed, in a great measure, of nominal professors, attracted by her enormous revenues, and her actual monopoly of all places of profit and trust under the crown. Archbishop Wake negotiated an alliance with Rome. Whether our Established Church would coalesce with the Greek, Armenian, and other Episcopal Churches of the East, has not yet, I believe, been tried. I suspect they would reject her advances. As for the Presbyterians of this country, we entertain no hostility against the Episcopal Church. We are content that the state shall have a religion of its own, while we are not discouraged from worshipping God in our own way.

(e) Notwithstanding the great merits of the Presbyterian Incum-

bents, I agree with this writer, that they had no legal right to their livings, and that they could not expect to be continued in them after the Restoration; but they had surely an equitable claim to a liberal recompense for such important services, cruel sufferings, and inflexible loyalty. Instead of this, they were persecuted in the most virulent manner by the Bishops. After some time, however, their merits were acknowledged, and, at different times, the Royal Bounty has granted them relief, till the *Regium Donum* attained to its present satisfactory state. As this subject has been misunderstood or misrepresented, and even made a subject of reproach to us, both in Ireland and England, I shall embrace this opportunity of making a few observations on it.

I conceive it to be the duty of the Magistrate to provide for the religious instruction of his people, and not to leave it to chance, or to the caprice or parsimony of his subjects, whether there shall be any exercise of religion in his dominions; and if this can be done, without any encroachment on religious liberty, in doctrine, worship, or civil rights, it is not easy to devise any objection to such an establishment. This kind of establishment, the Presbyterians of Ireland have enjoyed from an early period, in different degrees. The Royal Bounty is neither a novelty, nor ever used as an instrument of corruption by the Government. The present grant is on the same independent footing with other parts of the civil list. The liberal plan, on which it was bestowed by Government, removed every suspicion, that it could have any influence in the settlement of congregations; and, after ordination, the Minister is independent of Government, during his incumbency; but it does not render him independent on his people. The moderate amount of the annuity, and the discipline of his Church, guard against any apprehension of this kind. When we contribute so largely to the support of the Establishment, it is not unreasonable, that we should receive assistance from the state, to enable us to maintain our Ministers, who have the spiritual oversight of so large a portion of the people. It is a liberal acquiescence in an equitable claim. It is, therefore, accepted with all thankfulness.

It is little known among us, that the English Dissenters have enjoyed a *Regium Donum*, as well as we, and that they have been subject to as many reproaches, and injurious suspicions, as they have cast upon Irish Presbyterians. I shall, therefore, conclude this article with some account of it; without reviving those aspersions to which it has given rise. I shall only request the reader to observe which of these grants is most liable to objection.

In the reign of Charles II., 1672, the Presbyterian Ministers waiting on him in a body, to thank him for the *indulgence*, received an order for a yearly sum of 50*l.* to most of them, and 100*l.* a year to the chief of the party. Baxter sent back his portion; but most of them took it. In the same reign, Dr. Owens received 1000 guineas to distribute among those Dissenters, who had suffered most of the severities of his reign. In Queen Anne's reign, Dr. Daniel Williams, while Lord Oxford had the ascendant, refused to receive 1000*l.* as from her Majesty, to distribute among the Dissenters. As this gift was not clogged with any conditions, he was blamed by

many, as depriving a number that needed help of the benefit they might this way have had.

The origin of the present Royal Bounty was in April, 1732, during the ministry of Sir Robert Walpole. He closeted a few of the Ministers, whom he thought to have most influence among their brethren. He then declared his readiness to serve them in any way, even in Parliament, for the repeal of those cruel statutes against them; but that this year was a very improper time. He would not advise them to apply that season. A respectful postponement was very likely to obtain success. To enforce this reasoning, he drew 500*l.* out of the Treasury, by a warrant, payable to a surgeon, which was paid by another agent into the hands of the Ministers, "for the ease and comfort of the widows of Dissenting Ministers, till administration could more effectually serve their cause." But a strict charge was given, that the matter should be kept very secret. This gift was promised to be annual. The first motion for this grant had been made by Mr. Daniel Burgess, who had been Secretary to the Princess of Wales: he, out of his own head, and out of good will to those among whom he had received his education, proposed it to Lord Viscount Townsend, who mentioned it to his brother Walpole. The King readily consented, and some time after, 500*l.* more was, upon application made on that behalf, ordered to be paid each half year, for assisting either Ministers or their widows, or to be applied to such other use as the distributors thought to be most for their interest. The order was obtained each half year, by Mr. Burgess, payable to Mr. Ellis, the surgeon. When Mr. Burgess received it, he paid it to the nine Ministers. As any of them died, the survivors chose another in his room. The sum was equally divided among them, and each of them disposed of what he received as he thought best, generally shewing an account to the rest, that several might not give to the same person. Some few years after, the sum was advanced to 850*l.* half yearly. The whole transaction was kept as secret as possible:

When Sir Edmund Thomas offered to procure for Dr. Price, the disposal of the Regium Donum among his brethren, he immediately replied—that the best service Sir Edmund could render him or his brethren, would be to advise the King's Ministers to discontinue a donation which could only be regarded by every independent Dissenter as the price of his liberty. These grants, however, should no longer be called Regium Donum, or Royal Bounty, but a Parliamentary Grant; since both the Irish and English grants make part of the annual supplies, though the exact amount of either does not appear, being mixed up with other sums for similar purposes, thus—"Resolved, 2d April, 1829—That a sum not exceeding 581*l.* 7*s.* 10*d.* be granted to his Majesty, to pay the annual allowance to Protestant Dissenting Ministers, in England, poor French Protestant Refugee Clergy, poor French Protestant laity, and sundry small charitable and other allowances to the poor of St. Martin's in the Fields, and others, for the year 1829." It is understood, however, that the Dissenting Ministers receive 1,700*l.* at least, out of this sum, subject to the usual official deductions. The distribution was entrusted to Mr. Martin, an Independent Minister, for 10 years prior to 1806.

From that time, it was in the hands of Dr. Abraham Rees, till his death. It is now entrusted to one Minister of each of the three denominations—Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists.

ERASMUS.

INCONSISTENCIES OF CALVINISM.

IN adopting a system of belief, our first study should be, to choose that which our judgment tells us agrees best with Scripture; next to this, the best rule is to adopt that which is plainest—and the two rules will seldom disagree; for it often happens, that those who are fond of abstruse and mysterious doctrines, involve themselves in inconsistencies and difficulties, if not downright contradictions, some of which I intend presently to point out. Though, however, some may *prefer* plain doctrines to those which are mysterious, it is not fair to represent all who do so as rejecting certain tenets, *because* they cannot understand them. It is not for this reason, but because they think the Scriptures do not teach such doctrines, that they reject them; for every one who has ever reflected on the subject, must be aware that we are entirely ignorant of the manner in which a great many things of daily occurrence operate; yet, among many other misrepresentations respecting the opinions of their opponents, this is a species of argument frequently adopted by the self-styled *Orthodox* declaimers of the present day.

I shall now notice a few inconsistencies which attend upon the Calvinistic system; and from which, that opposed to it, owing to its greater plainness and simplicity, seems to me to be free. Calvinists, in order to support their system, are reduced to the necessity of representing the Saviour as sometimes speaking as God, and sometimes as man; to believe which, in my opinion, renders the Gospel both inconsistent and unintelligible. The Calvinist accuses those who do not believe in the Trinity, of degrading the Son, by representing him as subordinate to the Father; but at the very time that he (the Calvinist) is exalting the Saviour with the one hand, he is degrading him with the other. Yes, he degrades him far below the rank assigned him by the slandered Unitarian. He degrades him below the rank of a mere honest man. When Christ says, (Mark, xiii. 32) "Of that day and

that hour knoweth no man—no, not the Angels, which are in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father,” could there be a greater insult offered to him, than not to believe him? Certainly no one will say that the human nature was at any time so strong as to be able to obscure and overpower the divine nature, and deprive a being of omniscience, whom all Christians believe to be at all times possessed of this attribute; and unless this was the case, since the Calvinist believes that Christ is the supreme God, the Almighty Father of all, it is him that he represents as having stated what could not be true! Never did the Arian, or the Socinian, or any other professing Christian, except the Trinitarian, represent either the Father or the Son as capable of such double-dealing and duplicity. Let us suppose a case. Suppose a man had received an education sufficient to qualify him for practising two professions—say, the medical and clerical. Suppose this man to be examined respecting his knowledge of a certain disease, which his education, as a physician, enabled him perfectly to understand; and that he denied all knowledge of the matter. Suppose, when remonstrated with, for having denied knowing what he must have known, that he would reply—“It is true, that, *as a doctor*, I understood the disease perfectly, but *as a clergyman*, I knew nothing about it; and it was in the latter capacity I spoke.” What would any man, whether Calvinist or not, think of such prevarication? Would not every honest man look on him, who was capable of acting thus, as a lying, perjured villain? and instead of trusting him again, and adopting him as a teacher and a guide to direct him how to gain admission into a better world, would he not shun such a wretch as a pestilence to society? Yet such is the state to which Calvinists degrade him, who was the “way, the TRUTH, and the life.” I challenge the Synod of Ulster, and all Calvinists, to show by what authority they believe and teach this doctrine, which leads to such dreadful results. Let them state in that most evangelical work, “The Orthodox Presbyterian,” in what part of the Gospel Christ made this distinction, and how he enabled his followers to say how much he spoke in the one character, and how much in the other. When this is done, let them explain how much value is to be attached to each respectively. This is absolutely necessary, for what was delivered as God

must be of infinitely greater importance than what was delivered as man. Since, as has been shown, part of what Christ is said to have spoken as man is not to be credited, it is only natural to insist upon knowing how much is to be rejected. Perhaps it would be going too far, to say, that what was spoken as man could not be the word of God ; but if a Deist were to ask a Calvinist, since he knew that Christ had spoken part of the Gospel as man, part of which was not to be believed, and could not state how much of it had been so delivered—what security any one could have that it was not all given in the same character ; I suspect he (the Calvinist) could not give a very satisfactory answer.

Calvinists censure those who do not believe in the Trinity, of resting their hopes of salvation upon a being who must necessarily possess very little power, and who of course can do very little for them ; but if they do not believe that it was the supreme God himself who suffered, bled, and died upon the cross—a thing which I believe few will maintain—then it follows, upon their own hypothesis, that it was only the human nature of Christ that suffered ; consequently this is all they have to depend upon for their Saviour and Redeemer, their Mediator and Intercessor. Certainly, this is much less to rest upon than to believe that the greatest and most exalted being that ever existed, except ONE, laid down his life, *without reservation*, for their sakes, and still lives at his Father's right hand, to make intercession for them. I do not, however, blame those who believe in this doctrine, of doing these things intentionally. They are not aware of the consequences which attend upon their incongruous system. I would advise them, however, to be more cautious how they presume to deal out condemnation upon others. Let them rather learn humility, and let them beware of accusing others of degrading and denying the Saviour, rejecting revelation, &c. when, in another form, they may be more guilty of the same crimes themselves.

Another gross inconsistency, which is very common among the same class of men, is, to pretend in *words*, that they grant the use of reason to all men, while their *acts* prove that they deny it to all who think differently from themselves. All men exercise their own reason, and there are few who would at all times deny the use

of the reasoning faculty to their brethren. Calvinists are generally very anxious that Roman Catholics should abandon their notes and comments; and pretend, while arguing with them, that the Scriptures are all-sufficient as a rule of faith and practice. Had the Synod acted fairly upon this principle, there would never have been a separation in the body—for this is all the Remonstrants contend for. The most rigid Calvinist, the most thorough-going supporter of the late measures in the Synod will tell his hearers to search the Scriptures, and to think for themselves. But mark the result. If a man act upon this advice, and, by reading and reasoning, and reflecting upon what he reads, become convinced that Calvinism is not the religion of the Bible, and have the candour and hardihood to avow his sentiments, that moment he is denounced as far gone on the broad way to destruction; and war is commenced against the infidel, or his opinions, (for sometimes this distinction is made, though not always,) and earnestly recommended as a Christian virtue. And yet, the very men who act thus, condemn in no measured terms the infallibility claimed by the Roman Catholic Church, as if an assumed infallibility were allowable in one Church and not in another.

We frequently find Calvinists drawing contrasts between reason and revelation, and arguing as though all who prize the former must necessarily, to a certain degree, reject or depreciate the latter; but certainly there is no jarring or opposition between them. At the same time that these men accuse others of appreciating reason too highly, and at the expense of revelation, they are themselves guilty of as great an error, for they endeavour to exalt the latter, by depreciating the former. Revelation is certainly the more important of the two; but were we not possessed of reason, revelation would be of no more use to us than to the beasts of the field; for it is only by exercising our reason upon it, that we are enabled to reap the advantage of revelation. They are two of the best and noblest gifts which the Creator has bestowed upon man; and it is a strange way of exalting any one of them, to depreciate the other. They go hand in hand, assisting and supporting each other; and no person possessed of an enlightened and liberal understanding would ever attempt to separate them. "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

It may be too much to expect, in general, that any man's practice should quite agree with his profession ; for with most people, the latter is superior to the former. There are many more people who know pretty well what is right, than who choose to practice it, and consequently a far greater number of lovers of virtue, than virtuous men in the world ; but when we hear men profess to hold opinions so completely calculated to destroy every incentive to virtuous actions, that they *dare* not for a moment either act upon their theory themselves, or allow others to do it, we may safely conclude, that it cannot be wrong to reject such doctrines as erroneous. Some Calvinists pretend to believe that no matter how virtuous a man may be, yet it is possible that an infinitely just being may have pronounced, thousands of years before this man was born, an irreversible decree, dooming him to everlasting perdition. Every person who possesses the smallest glimmerings of common sense, might see, not only that such a doctrine is not to be found in Scripture, but that if acted upon, it would subvert and annihilate every rule and principle of religion and morality. If it be possible that virtue *may* be of no use to man, who would be virtuous ? or why was he told to be virtuous ? It is a strong presumptive proof, however, that nobody really believes in this doctrine to its full extent, when no man is found to act upon it. Such conduct resembles passing a continual bill of indemnity for breaking a law which nobody ought or dares to obey. I wonder how those who believe in predestination, can blame a man for committing any crime ; yet no class of men are more censorious. When a man, who professes to believe in this dogma, has committed a crime, he may—and some are found to do it—so far insult his Creator, as to say, that *he could not get over it, that it was allowed he should do it* ; but this will not satisfy his conscience so far as to avert the fear of punishment.

Even justification by faith, one of the cardinal points in the Synod of Ulster's theological compass, if it mean any thing, must mean that it is by faith alone we must be justified ; and consequently, that what are commonly called "good works," can be of no use to us. I would ask those who have this word so often upon their lips, and who are so anxious for contrasts, that they separate and contrast things which were never intended to be se-

parated or set in opposition to each other, and thereby weaken both, as many things are strong when united, which become weak when divided—what faith is? If it can be altogether separated from “works,” then it must be the power or the spirit of God working upon our minds, independent of our acts, and therefore involuntary on our parts; consequently, we would have no more right to be censured on account of it, whether it was sound or unsound, orthodox or heterodox, than for the hue of our skin, or the features of our face. If, however, we are able, by prayer and supplication, by reading and thinking, to make our faith, or change it, or be the means, however indirectly or imperfectly, of making or changing it, then so far as it depends upon ourselves, it rather deserves a place among those things which are commonly called good works. I am fully persuaded, that when we have used our best endeavours to discover the truth, the conviction which arises in our minds, in consequence of our enquiries, is involuntary. Therefore it is according as our own powers have been properly directed and exercised, that we should be praised or censured—or, in other words, according to our works.

In “The Orthodox Presbyterian” for June, I observe some statements which deserve to be placed under the head which is affixed to this paper. It is probable there is abundance of the same kind of matter in other numbers of the same work, but I have not had the happiness of seeing many of them. I say happiness, for it is a satisfaction to any one who believes as I do, to see how little fair argument can be urged against his opinions; and it is only fair to infer, that the conductors use the best of which their cause will admit. The manner in which this periodical advocates its cause, reminds me strongly of a certain fish, of which I have read. This animal possesses neither weapons to defend itself against its enemies, nor agility to elude them; and when likely to be overtaken, it has no other means of baffling its pursuers than by discharging from its body a kind of black matter, which renders the water so muddy that its pursuers can no longer see it, and by this means effects its escape. Just so “The Orthodox Presbyterian,” instead of meeting its opponents in fair honourable combat, endeavours to blind all whose intellectual organs are so weak as to be affected by the matter which

it emits, that it may the more readily effect its escape, proclaiming all the while a self-trumpeted victory. It is certainly quite becoming in such writers to inculcate the doctrine of original sin; for if any thing could make me believe in it, it would be such writings—they are certainly an excellent commentary upon it. It is not altogether unnatural that those who feel in their own hearts so much of the corruption of human nature, as to be convinced that they must have been radically tainted even at their birth, should insist that all mankind are in the same state as themselves. The fox that had lost his tail accidentally, wished to have all the rest of his species consent to the same mutilation. Even in this doctrine there is an inconsistency; for while those who believe in it, pretend that they acknowledge their own unworthiness and wickedness in the most ample manner, they adroitly throw the chief burden of their iniquities upon Adam, and thus acquit themselves of the principal share of the blame; for it is impossible to censure those for being wicked, who, previous to their birth, had been rendered incapable of being virtuous.

“The Orthodox Presbyterian,” in reviewing one of the resolutions of the Remonstrant Synod, attempts to deny (page 300) that the Overtures “trench upon the most valuable privileges of the people in the free election of their pastors; but he says at the same time, that “the Synod will not any longer assist in foisting Arians and Socinians into Orthodox congregations.” This may be fair enough; but is this all? The supporters of the Overtures have often expressly declared, that they will not on any account admit an Arian into the body, or allow him to remain in it. Now suppose (at the worst) that there were an Arian congregation in connexion with the Synod, would it not be trenching upon the right of election, to refuse an Arian Minister to such congregation? One would think from the manner in which the writer speaks of this resolution, that no Arian congregation had ever belonged, or ever could belong to the Synod; but let the reader turn to pages 289 and 290 of the same article, and see what is said of the Remonstrant congregations. The expressions are somewhat varied—some of these congregations are said to be totally turned Arian, some totally gone over to the Arians, &c. &c. The meaning intended to be conveyed, however, is always the same,

namely, that all who have left the Synod are Arians or Socinians. I know that some will say this is but indifferent authority, and probably some contumacious Remonstrant may deny the truth of the assertion entirely ; but "The Orthodox Presbyterian" will scarcely question such evidence. Thus I have shown from this writer's own words, that there are a number of congregations which he, and those who act with him, would have deprived of the privilege of choosing their own Pastors, had they possessed the means. As well might it be said, that in restricting the choice of schoolmasters to those who spoke one particular language, say the French, those who did so (knowing that all who spoke any other language, however "*acceptable*" they might be to the people, could not be "*useful*" to them) did not interfere in their free election by the people ; for though the people were not allowed to choose between an Englishman and a Frenchman, they might choose between one Frenchman and another, and therefore still possessed the unrestricted liberty of choosing their own schoolmaster.

In page 296, may be found an excellent argument against attaching rewards to one set of opinions and penalties to another, as at present practised in the Synod of Ulster. "In times past, it was by no means uncommon to find a candidate for the ministry profess to adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith ; to affix to it his signature of approval ; to get ordained under this pretended profession in an Orthodox congregation. But the moment he was so ordained, the mask begins to fall off, and in due course an Arian or Socinian stands full confessed before the deceived and injured people. Such cases have not been unfrequent." Could there be a better argument produced against attempting to prescribe the manner in which people must think, in order to be admitted into the Synod ? And will any man who is capable of acting in this manner, hesitate to present himself before the Examination Committee ? A man who is capable of telling one untruth, will scarcely scruple to have a lie ready coined for every member of the Committee who may question him. If the Synod really wish that none of its members should be hypocrites, let it abolish the premium for hypocrisy. This is the only way it can be done ; for while the premium remains, there will always be found people unprincipled enough to take

advantage of it ; but at the same time, let not those who may cause a weak brother to err, think themselves clear of all blame. Those who place stumbling-blocks in the path of others, are certainly as culpable as those who may fall over them.

In page 296, may be found the following :—" We must complain, reply the Remonstrants, for you will not allow us to change our minds. This charge we flatly deny ; you may change as often as you will ;" (on the same principle, the judges of the land grant every man liberty to commit murder,) " but when you resolve in your own mind not to do the work that you promised to perform, we consider you as bound to resign the situation and the wages." Compare this with the following passage from the same article :—" But the Synod is accused, moreover, of a breach of solemn compact, under which the Remonstrant Ministers entered the Synod. * * * * Such a compact, real or implied, we utterly deny. * * * * But even had such a compact been made, like the compact of Herod, which involved the death of Johu the Baptist, the compact were more honoured in the breach than in the observance. Luther, and Calvin, and Knox, no doubt, entered into a solemn compact with the Church of Rome ; but did that compact bind them never to reform ?" These two passages present a very pretty contrast to each other. In the first, the writer will not allow of a change of opinion, or at least attaches a penalty to the change—in the last, he highly approves of changing. According to the last, it was a meritorious act in Luther, and Calvin, and Knox to change or reform ; but according to the first, it is a sin worthy of exclusion from the Church to do so now. In short, those who will not allow people to change their minds, justify all the persecutions which the Church of Rome inflicted upon the Reformers, and would act in the same manner themselves, if they possessed the power. And again, if they condemn those persecutions, then they must admit the propriety of changing.

How long will people tamely submit to be duped and blinded, and to have their dearest and most sacred interests trampled in the dust, by men who are capable of maintaining such glaring absurdities, such gross inconsistencies, and such downright contradictions ?

AN ELDER'S SON.

STRICTURES

ON SOME PASSAGES OF

"THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN."

WHEN writers count largely on the prejudices or the credulity of their readers, it is wonderful what liberties they will take with the opinions of men who dissent from them. Few writers, if any, have been more forward in this way, than "The Orthodox Presbyterian" and his correspondents. He frequently draws his bow at a venture, and, having two strings to it, he defends his professed disciples through good and through bad report; he next covers all who will not enlist under his standard with painted devils, and having thus made an apology, as he wishes it to be thought, for attacking them, he lets his arrows fly with the utmost bitterness. It is lucky, however, that though the spirit is willing the flesh is weak;—by which his darts either fall short of the mark, or do not even dint the armour of truth.

This doughty warrior, in one of his sham skirmishes, asserts, (page 45,) "Still more were we astonished, when we afterwards discovered, that Socinians, as well as Arians, professed to believe in the 'Divinity' of Christ; while yet Socinians believe that Christ was a mere man."—I am not so well skilled in the wiles of mysterious theology as "The Orthodox Presbyterian," but being a little acquainted with matters of fact, I boldly and firmly assert, that there is not a single Socinian in the United Kingdom. If there were, what would it prove? Faustus Socinus sounds as well as John Calvin, and he was of a much more illustrious birth. They were both living at the same time, were both mere men, and were both persecutors;—the one of Davides, and the other of Servetus. They both worshipped Christ, and were both reformers. Where then is the great honour of being a follower of the latter, and the great disgrace of being called after the former? A genuine Christian cannot be the disciple of either, and must easily see that their claims are equally good or bad. Socinus did not "believe that Christ was a mere man;" he believed that he was a man *miraculously inspired by God*, far above any other prophet, and taught that, after his ascension, a degree of the same religious worship which is due to his Father should be

offered to him. Here, then, is an important distinction between Unitarians and Socinians, respecting the religious adoration of Christ. Unitarians believing him worthy of love, honour, and gratitude as the anointed of God, but, considering that "the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the FATHER in spirit and in truth;" they cannot give that worship to another, which the Father claims as his own, and which Christ, both by precept and example, taught his disciples to confine to "*his* Father and *our* Father, to *his* God and *our* God."

It is true that Unitarians and Socinians agree in some things; and it is equally true, that Calvinists and Socinians agree in some things. Nay more, Calvinists agree with Roman Catholics in the doctrines of the Trinity, original sin, satisfaction, and, in some measure, in human authority; and with the Mahometans, in predestination. But it by no means follows, that every Unitarian is a Socinian, or that every Calvinist is a Roman Catholic, or a Mahometan. They all profess to believe in the *divinity* of the Scriptures; but, strange to relate, the *divinity* of *human creeds, korans, articles and overtures*, has, with most of them, thrown the word of God into the *second place*, as something imperfect and insufficient as a rule of faith and practice.

"The Orthodox Presbyterian," (page 73,) states, "there are scarcely any that hold every opinion of Calvin, yet we do not hesitate to denominate as Calvinists, all who hold the *eternity and sovereignty of the divine purposes*. These doctrines, constituting the *distinguishing features* of the *Calvinistic system*, fairly entitle us to give the *name of Calvinist to every man* by whom they are professed." This is a statement remarkable for its plainness, and which John Calvin would not himself have made. Calvinism, *as a system*, is too desperate for the *moderns*, and, though they have parted with the *points*, yet they fondly cling by the *name*. The *Jews*, as such, were prohibited from eating swine's flesh; some of them, however, as the story runs, ventured to taste this part and others that, until the *whole animal* was consumed. They still, notwithstanding, retained their *distinguishing title*. In like manner, nominal Calvinists take great liberties with their leader. One denies the doctrine of reprobation, another the damnation of infants, and a

third, particular redemption, until all the peculiarities of the *system* are either modified or denied by some of its *nominal* supporters. Uniformity being thus a forlorn hope with "The Orthodox Presbyterian," he counts kindred with churches just as it serves his ambition or interest.

It must strike the enlightened reader of "*The Bible Christian*," that while this *characteristic of Calvinism*, as now quoted from "The Orthodox Presbyterian," excommunicates from the pale of the Orthodox Church, Arminians, Wesleyan Methodists, and all who deny the eternity of the decrees and purposes of God concerning the actions of man; it opens wide the doors of the sanctuary for Dr. Priestley and Mr. Belsham, and a number of Unitarians, who are as zealous for "the eternity and sovereignty of the divine purposes," as "The Orthodox Presbyterian" himself.

"The Orthodox Presbyterian," (page 74,) makes this assertion: "Now the Bible, from the beginning to the end, attributes the salvation of a sinner to God. The Bible, also, from beginning to end, points to the Lamb of God, Jesus, the Saviour." Now I will venture to affirm, on behalf of every Unitarian Christian in existence, that no human composition can more distinctly portray his views respecting salvation than this language of "The Orthodox Presbyterian." There is no philosopher but looks to the *sun* as the *medium* of *light* and *heat* to the natural world; not that he believes the sun shines *in and of itself*, but because he believes that "God said, let there be light; and there was light." In a similar way, there is no Unitarian who believes in the *merits* of his *own good works*, or in any *creature* for salvation, but he *trusts in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men*, and, at the same time, gladly receives Jesus Christ as the *medium* of this salvation, as the appointed and authorized messenger of the Most High. "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." 1. Thess. v. 9. God is spoken of throughout the whole of the Scriptures as the original Redeemer and Saviour. "Thou, O LORD, art our FATHER, our REDEEMER." Isaiah, lxiii. 16. "They remembered that GOD was their rock, and THE HIGH GOD their REDEEMER." Psalm, lxxviii, 35. "Giving thanks

UNTO THE FATHER, who *hath delivered* us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son." Col. i. 12. "This is good and acceptable in the sight of GOD our *Saviour*, who will have all men to be saved." 1. Tim. ii. 3. The Father does not save us from the Son, nor the Son from the Father, but they both save us from *sin* :—the FATHER as the *original* deliverer, and his SON, the medium of Salvation.—"All things are of GOD, who hath RECONCILED US TO HIMSELF, *by* JESUS CHRIST, and hath given to us the ministry of *reconciliation*. GOD was, *in* Christ, reconciling the world to himself." 2 Cor. v. 18, 19.

This *reputedly* Orthodox Periodical, (page 84,) makes a rash attack upon the amiable and learned Dr. Drummond, who stands distinguished as a poet, a classical scholar, a philosopher, and a divine. The attack is so rudely made, that some of the more discerning advocates of that publication, lament the uncourteous manner of it. Unable to grapple with his arguments, he is condemned, not so much for what he has said, as because "*he has not informed*" the world, in a small volume, what he believes on every theological subject. Dr. Drummond, I am persuaded, while he cannot be supposed to notice such ribaldry, and has nothing to fear for himself, must pity the ignorance and malice of his enemies.

The stroke at Dr. Drummond, as it appears, is only intended as an introduction to a charge against "Ram-mohun Roy,—the natives of Switzerland,—and Dr. Priestley ;" and through them at the Remonstrants of Ulster. It must be sickening to every sincere christian, of every denomination, to read the disgusting and untrue attacks that have been made by "The Orthodox Presbyterian," upon the pious and learned Christian Brahmin of the East. I have conversed with a gentleman who was in company with him, and he could scarcely express the veneration he felt for his varied talents and many virtues, and for the sacrifices he has made in his attachment to Christianity. He has devoted a *third* part of his ample fortune to the promotion of education, christianity, and civilization ; and he is, at the same time, the patron and supporter of literature. He has not adopted christianity on light grounds, and those who do not agree with him in some of his views of it, should at

least abstain from rash censure and coarse invective.—Any one who is acquainted with the statements of Mr. Buckingham, the Rev. W. Adam, and Bishop Middleton, cannot countenance the foul abuse thrown on this great and good man, by “The Orthodox Presbyterian.” Indeed, it is a strange way for Calvinists to labour to convince men of the truth of Divine Revelation, and having succeeded, to turn upon all who cannot see every chapter and verse as they see it, and pour out upon them abuse and misrepresentation. To be sure this abuse is founded on newspaper reports; but why the friends of “The Orthodox Presbyterian” would rather have many newspaper articles *not believed at home*, and at the same time so zealously quote from *foreign papers, which, like themselves, are orthodox in the faith*, against the enlightened and philanthropic Rammohun Roy, requires some explanation! If they promise to abide by newspaper statements, I engage to treat them to one or two, which will be more troublesome to them than entertaining to their readers.

It is not wonderful that a certain writer in “The Orthodox Presbyterian” should see what was going forward in the churches of the highlands of Switzerland, when the Rev. John Brown, of Aghadoey, saw the errors and corruptions that have covered the lowlands of it at Geneva. It requires little research and less philosophy to know, that the calumny against the natives of Switzerland is both base and unfounded. I had, about six years ago, a long conversation with the late Arthur Crawford, Esq. M.P. of Crawfords-burn, concerning the religion of the Swiss, and it was truly gratifying to hear of their simplicity, sincerity, and firmness as Christians. He had lived among them for some time, and no one who knew that upright and enlightened gentleman, will dare to dispute his veracity and discernment. The pastors of Geneva have deemed it but just to themselves and to their brethren, to pronounce the charge of Mr. John Brown as *absolutely false*; and if it were not so, who will venture to say that they would have taken it up, at such a distance, and in the face of Europe. Mr. Brown and “The Orthodox Presbyterian” have so committed themselves in this as in some other cases, that many may learn prudence at their expense. I would seriously recommend “The Orthodox Presbyterian” to read the replies of the Rev. W. J. Fox, of Lon-

don, to Dr. Pye Smith's assertions, before he inserts the Doctor's muddy reasonings in his pages.

If Dr. Priestley were living, I cannot imagine he would notice the shameless reproaches which "The Orthodox Presbyterian" has industriously laboured to cast upon him. Calvin forsook Popery, Dr. Priestley relinquished Calvinism, and Rammohun Roy abandoned Hindoo Polytheism; and for these offences, their old fellow-believers have endeavoured to cast odium upon their motives and tenets. If Calvinism and infallibility be synonymous terms, then Dr. Priestley deserves every reproach that can be cast upon him. Though I do not agree with him in many of his religious opinions, I, nevertheless, deem it a duty to redeem his reputation from the vulgar censure of "The Orthodox Presbyterian." Who and what was Dr. Priestley, that his name and ashes should be so insulted? He was undoubtedly, as admitted by a multitude of the most eminent divines and philosophers, one of the greatest men that ever England produced. He was constantly in search of truth, and followed after evidence wherever it led him. The pure minded and distinguished Dr. Priestley was the author of *one hundred and eight* distinct publications, *sixteen* of which were written to *vindicate the truth of the Christian Revelation*; and in one of them he so completely exposed the sophistry of Tom Paine and the pretended philosophers of France, that he was more dreaded by Deists than he was hated by Calvinists. After having made many sacrifices for the sake of a good conscience;—after having advanced the cause of philosophy by his writings and experiments; and after having vindicated the truth of Christianity by arguments, which, if equalled, have never been excelled, his house and library were burned at Birmingham, in 1791, by an orthodox mob, and himself obliged to remove to London to save his life;—and finally to exile himself from his native country by emigrating to North America. The malice of his enemies pursued him even there; for while he was treated with the utmost kindness at New York, and at every town he visited, and was solicited by the unanimous vote of the trustees to accept of a Professorship in the University of Philadelphia, he was maligned and calumniated by some of the orthodox newspapers of England, and represented by them as a person hated and hunted by the Americans, as if he had been a wild beast. But it

was impossible to injure Dr. Priestley in the estimation of the virtuous. He was so well known and so much admired by so many great men, that his society was courted by the Philosophers and Biblical Critics, both of the old and the new world; Dr. Price, whose life was spent in learned labours for the good of mankind; Sir George Savile, his country's guardian and delight; Mr. Lee, the talented Attorney General; the celebrated Dr. John Jebb; the accomplished Bishop Shipley; Dr. Law, the venerable Bishop of Carlisle, and a great many others of distinguished fame, were the intimate friends and warm admirers of Dr. Priestley. Dr. Parr, universally acknowledged as one of the most learned ministers that ever adorned the Church of England, thus writes of him—"Let Dr. Priestley indeed be confuted, where he is mistaken; let him be exposed, where he is superficial; let him be repressed, where he is dogmatical; let him be rebuked where he is censorious. But let not his attainments be depreciated, because they are numerous, almost without a parallel. Let not his talents be ridiculed, because they are superlatively great. Let not his morals be vilified, because they are correct without austerity, and exemplary without ostentation; because they present, even to common observers, the innocence of a Hermit and the simplicity of a Patriarch; and because a philosophic eye will at once discover in them the deep-fixed root of virtuous principle, and the solid trunk of virtuous habit."

The fact is, Dr. Priestley was a great and good man; a general scholar; a voluminous writer; an able advocate of Christianity; a profound philosopher; and, whatever were the peculiarities of his faith, he was admired by learned men of all creeds, and was invited to fill a variety of important places, both in England and America.

"Stirs not thy spirit, Priestley, as the train
With low obeisance and with servile phrase,
File behind file, advance, with supple knee,
And lay their necks beneath the foot of power?
Burns not thy cheek indignant, when thy name,
On which delighted science loved to dwell,
Becomes the *bandied theme of hooting crowds*?"

"The Orthodox Presbyterian" pursuing the course which he has marked out for himself, heads an article, (page 200,) "*Unitarian Version*;" under which he says,

“the following extracts from the *Unitarian* version—— will show sufficient reasons why a Remonstrant Minister and Elder should be so ashamed of it, as to deny publicly that they had ever circulated it.” This inuendo is both foul and cowardly. Who is this Minister and Elder? Though the public may not know, I understand the insinuation, and reply, that, had the Minister and Elder done what is attributed to them, they would openly own it, and could not deny it with the possibility of escape. They feel themselves at perfect liberty to purchase any Book they please, and to circulate it in any manner they deem best. But the fact is, they never *purchased, nor circulated*, in one instance, a single copy of “*The New Testament, in an improved version, upon the basis of Archbishop Newcome’s New Translation,*” and which “*The Orthodox Presbyterian*” is pleased to call “*the Unitarian version.*” They cannot, then, acknowledge a falsehood to gratify “*The Orthodox Presbyterian.*” They have, indeed, read the *Improved Version*, and so has “*The Orthodox Presbyterian,*” as appears by his quotations. Why, then, condemn them for doing what he has done himself? It was to be sure, a rule among the Orthodox priests of old times, that *common people* should not be allowed to read the Scriptures; and if any such were permitted, a license was necessary.—What can “*The Orthodox Presbyterian*” intend by this unmeaning attack, as if any Remonstrant Minister and Elder were accountable for any translations of the New Testament, or any notes that may be connected with it? There have been different English Translations of the Scriptures, and the one now in general use is of very modern date, even since the establishment of Presbyterianism in Ireland, and not without inaccuracies. The tables of contents, placed at the head of the chapters, and the words printed in *italics*, which are intended for *emphasis* in other books, but which are an acknowledgment of *interpolation* by the translators of the received version of the Scriptures, are too often taken by the generality of readers for the words of the Prophets and Apostles.

DELTA.

THE REV. W. PORTER'S REJOINDER TO THE
REV. J. BROWN.

IN "The Orthodox Presbyterian" for August last, the Rev. John Brown has published what he terms "*A Reply to the Rev. William Porter*," which constrains me to trespass once more on your indulgence.

It is necessary to remind your readers that I had accused Mr. Brown,—

1st. Of having positively and falsely asserted, in a much talked of discourse preached in Drumachose upwards of two years ago, that the disputed text in one of John's Epistles, relative to the Three Heavenly Witnesses, is *retained as genuine* in Griesbach's edition of the Greek Testament; and

2dly. I had accused him, of having unequivocally alluded to me as a person who had attempted to support an erroneous system of belief, by falsely affirming from the pulpit, that the text in question is *rejected by Griesbach as spurious*.

In support of the *first* charge, four respectable individuals have already given clear and conclusive testimony; and two of them have done the same in support of the *second*. Both these charges, however, Mr. Brown still persists in denying: and he has published two documents, which he represents as completely confirmatory of his case. In refutation of the first charge he has favoured the public with a testimonial to which thirty names are attached, and in which it is "*solemnly declared*," that the statement made by the Rev. John Brown, in No. IX of "The Orthodox Presbyterian," is a fair representation of what was delivered by him on the occasion referred to. In other words, these thirty persons *solemnly declare*, that the Reverend Preacher neither represented Griesbach as retaining the verse, which it is now admitted has been rejected by that eminent critic, nor alluded to me as the neighbouring Minister, or person, who had attempted to support error by falsehood.

In refutation of the *second* charge, Mr. Brown has produced a paper, to which fourteen *additional* names are attached, and in which it is "*solemnly declared, that in the discourse delivered by him, no attack was made on the Rev. William Porter*."

The foregoing, it must be owned, is a very formidable array—but it is formidable merely in appearance. Amongst the forty-four witnesses, there are, no doubt, some respectable men who have been imposed on by Mr. Brown or his coadjutors; and led to believe that their signatures were about to be affixed to documents very different from those which have been palmed on the public. Several persons of this description are in the list of vouchers. But I appeal to the Rev. Richard Dill, not long since Minister of Drumachose, whether there are not many of those forty-four witnesses, who are so uneducated, and uninformed, that their personal appearance for the purpose of giving testimony on the points in discussion, would provoke a burst of laughter in any court whatever. I am authorized by the Rev. John McLaughlin to assert, that seven of the men whose names are subscribed to the *first* testimonial in favour of Mr. Brown, declare, that their *signatures have been forged*; and that two others of them acknowledge, that they signed the document, *because it was against Arianism* !!! *

Three of the most respectable amongst Mr. Brown's witnesses, namely, Messrs. Robert Hunter, James Long, and Thomas Horner, all of Newtownlimavady, have declared to me, that they never intended to say positively, that assertions tantamount to those charged, were not used by Mr. Brown, but, merely, that they *had no* recollection of his having used them; which is as much as any conscientious man could say, unless he took it for granted, that his memory was infallible; unless he was capable of recollecting a nonentity; unless he could distinctly remember to have *heard* the preacher *not* saying such, or such words. The testimony of a witness of this kind would carry its own refutation on its face.

Messrs. Hunter, Long, and Horner have further authorized me to state, that they are *now convinced*, by evidence lately submitted to their consideration, that the charges preferred against Mr Brown are well founded.

Mr Samuel Moore, of Artikelly, another subscriber to one of the testimonials, says, that he still thinks there

* For reasons best known to himself, but not altogether hidden from me, Mr. Brown has thought fit to *reverse* the order of the two charges preferred. For perspicuity's sake I abide by the original arrangement.

was no personal attack made on me. When asked, whether he would take an oath to that effect, he promptly declared that he would not: thus, declining to verify by affidavit, a statement, which he has positively and solemnly declared to be true. Another gentleman, whose testimony has been appealed to by Mr. Brown, has requested me not to publish the import of what passed between us in conversation.

In page 391, Mr. Brown says—“*To prove that Mr. Porter's charges are groundless, I shall adduce one witness by name, and am ready with a multitude to the same effect. I met lately in Coleraine, Robert Macrory, Esq. of Balteagh, who heard my Sermon. He is intimately acquainted with Mr. Porter and Mr. Moore, and yet he expressed his conviction there was no attack made by me against Mr. Porter; and farther, that notwithstanding his intimacy, he never heard the charge alluded to, until, when after my vindication, he was appealed to, by Mr. Porter. This is surely one competent witness of my innocence.*”

Mr. Macrory is certainly a competent witness, but whether his testimony goes to establish either the *innocence* or the honesty of Mr. Brown, the following letter addressed to Dr. Moore, one of my “*disreputable*” vouchers, will show.

Ardmore Lodge, 13th, Sept. 1830.

“My dear Sir,—I was not a little surprised to see in “*The Orthodox Presbyterian*,” for September, the manner in which the Rev. John Brown, of Aghadwoey, made use of a conversation which I had with him in Coleraine; and as I distinctly remember the conversation, I think it necessary, on your account, to state all the particulars.

Mr. Brown produced a paper with a number of names attached, and requested me to sign it. I told him that at the distant period of 3 years, or nearly so, I had no recollection of his attack on Mr. Porter; but that having heard that *you* had borne testimony to the fact, I felt convinced you would not make such a statement had it not been true.

From further evidence which I have since seen, I have no hesitation in saying that the offensive allusion to Mr. Porter must have been made by Mr. Brown, although I cannot charge my memory with it.

Believe me, dear Sir, yours truly,

R. MACRORY.

To Doctor Moore.

Mr. Brown says that he is ready with a multitude of *such* witnesses as Mr. Macrory. Whether he is likely to derive advantage from producing them, is a question which admits of dubitation. This truly respectable gentleman, whom he has placed in the van of his defenders,

has proved him guilty of garbling evidence for the purpose of making a false impression on the public mind.

Mr. Brown has also published a letter from Counsellor Sproule, which is, at least, as favourable to my side of the question as it is to his own. Will Mr. Brown venture to appeal to the opinion now entertained by the Counsellor, on the points at issue? I say to my Rev. opponent "*you will not—you dare not.*"

Mr. Brown says, that Archibald Fisher, Esq. has added his name to words of similar import, to those employed in one of the testimonials. Why then has not Mr. Fisher's testimony been produced? I predict that it will never be produced.

How great must have been the dearth of competent testimony, when even the *appearance* of it has been so eagerly caught at? The six individuals whom I have now named, are the only witnesses adduced by my opponent, to whom I have spoken on the subject in dispute. But, doubtless, there are many others who never intended to give testimony in the *positive* style employed by the framers of the testimonials, and who are now thoroughly satisfied that Mr. Brown did utter the things charged, though "*they cannot bring the fact to their recollection.*"

The Rev. J. M'Laughlin, Doctor Moore, and Messrs. Millar and M'Kissack, *all* remember Mr. Brown's false assertion respecting Griesbach. Only two of those gentlemen distinctly recollect the injurious allusion to me—and so, because those two happen to remember a part of the sermon, about which the other two do not feel themselves competent to give decided testimony, Mr. Brown asserts, that they contradict one another, and that the whole of their testimony is overturned. This may pass for logic in the Theological Committee, but it will not pass current among men of sense. If such reasoning invalidates the evidence of my witnesses, it must equally invalidate the evidence of Mr. Brown's. Thirty of his vindicators vouch for things which are not vouched for by the remaining fourteen—Ergo—these two sets of vindicators contradict one another—and the testimony of both falls to the ground.

"Mr. Porter assumes," says my learned antagonist, "that I knew his criticism on the three witnesses;" * * * but "without a special revelation, I could not have hit on it." I merely proved that the Reverend

Gentleman, stated, and commented on my criticism, during the course of his sermon. *How* he came to the knowledge of it, I did not presume to say. It may have been by special inspiration. I am not one of the regenerated, and, of course, make no pretensions to preternatural communications from above. Yet Mr. Brown will presently be convinced, that, somehow or other, I have "*hit on*" several parts of his discourse, which he may have no great pleasure in remembering.

The reader has now had a sample of the contemptible quibbling, the low and disingenuous artifices, to which the Minister of Aghadowey has found it necessary to resort, in order to prop up his sinking cause, and sinking character.

In this unpleasant question, I have no longer any *personal* concern. The gentlemen who have come forward in support of my charge against Mr. Brown, have admitted, that they had previously stated to me, what they have since stated to the world. Their authority was abundantly sufficient to warrant my conduct in exhibiting the accusation; and were it ultimately to appear, that they gave me false information—still *my* character would be safe—no man could arraign *my* veracity. But as Mr. Brown has rashly dared to bespatter those respectable men with abuse, and publicly stigmatize them as false witnesses, merely because they had the manliness to declare the truth, I have felt it my duty to allow some persons to give testimony on the two points in question, whom, under other circumstances, I would willingly have kept in the back ground.

Miss Hendrick is a young lady, whom I will not insult by saying a single syllable about her moral, intellectual, or social respectability; and as she is personally known to most of the reputable inhabitants in the town and neighbourhood of Coleraine, even Mr. Brown will hardly venture to cast an aspersion on her character.—When I penned my last epistle, I did not recollect that she had heard the sermon in question. On learning this fact, I desired one of my daughters to request Miss H. to state her recollection of the discourse, as there was a dispute between the preacher and myself, about certain passages alleged to be contained in it. Her reply is subjoined. Though Miss Hendrick's habits of life are retiring in the extreme, yet her attachment to truth and

justice has induced her to comply with a request subsequently made, and permits the publication of her letter. I shall give only the material parts :—

Prospect Hill, 31st July, 1830.

My dear J.—Until I received your letter, I was not aware that there had been any controversy between your father and Mr. Brown. I was at Drumachose the day Mr. Brown preached on the Personality of the Spirit, and I have, even at this distance of time, a very clear recollection of the tenor and drift of the discourse. I do remember that the preacher enumerated several passages of the New Testament, which, he imagined, went to prove the personality of the Spirit of God. When he named 1. John, 5, 7, he certainly alluded to your father, as having taught that Griesbach gave up the text as an interpolation. Mr. Brown then positively asserted, to my utter astonishment, that Griesbach retained the verse as genuine. And here, I well remember, that he made an appeal to his audience, as to what would now be their opinion of that system, which required the support of falsehood ; and also of the person who had been guilty of thus supporting it. I cannot pledge myself as to the very words used by him on the occasion.—I cannot say precisely how he designated your father ; whether he called him man, or person, or individual ; but certain I am, that he made the allusion. His mentioning the Lectures previously delivered in the neighbourhood, put it beyond a doubt, to whom he alluded. He dwelt for some time on the subject.

What does Mr. Brown himself acknowledge to have said ? I do not think that any gloss he can put on his expressions, or any change of a word, or of words, can in the slightest degree alter their meaning and evident design ; namely, to establish a charge of falsehood against your father. But sure you were present yourself, and do you not remember his invidious attacks on Arians in general ; his unqualified assertions that they never prayed or read the Bible ; his saying that they never retained their opinions to the last, but always renounced them in the prospect of death. And do you not remember his warning, nay *entreating* the people, to hold no communication with Arians ; not to bid them “ *God speed ;*” or *have any kind of intercourse with them, no matter how amiable they might be, or what virtues they might possess ?* And do you not recollect his simile of the wild Indian ?

If Mr. B. can turn aside the sentiments expressed in that discourse from their natural meaning, he possesses more ingenuity than I thought could ever fall to the share of one man. What does he say ? I am, &c. &c.

MARY EMILIA HENDRICK.”

It is to be hoped, that, in the recently manufactured copy of his discourse, Mr. Brown has not suppressed *all* the passages alluded to by Miss Hendrick.

The writer of the following letter is a member of Drumachose congregation, and a highly respectable young man. The style in which he writes may serve as

a criterion of his competency as a witness. I never talked to him on the subject till the morning of the day the document is dated.

To the Rev. William Porter.

14th September, 1830.

SIR—Although I feel an aversion to put myself before the public in cases of disputation, yet, in the present instance, I do agree with you in thinking it a matter of public justice to state what I recollect of that part of Mr. Brown's sermon, about which you and he are now at issue.

In that sermon, Mr. Brown certainly did not mention your name; but I distinctly recollect having heard him make an allusion not at all complimentary to the veracity of the person alluded to; and that allusion was made in terms so direct, that I had not the slightest hesitation or difficulty in applying it to you.

I have just read Mr. Brown's reply, in the last number of "The Orthodox Presbyterian," and I am convinced that there is not an individual among the persons whose names are signed to the solemn declaration,—"*that there was no attack made on the Rev. William Porter*,"—who, if the following question had been put to him, immediately after Mr. Brown had concluded his discourse: "*To whom did Mr. Brown allude, when he asserted that a neighbouring Clergyman had attempted to support his doctrine by falsehood?*"—would not have answered, *Mr. Porter*.

I am, Rev. Sir, yours truly, &c.

GEORGE PROCTOR.

Mr. Robert M'Kissack, of Mullans, was present, I understand at the delivery of Mr. Brown's Sermon, and he lately told a friend of mine, for whose veracity I vouch, that when his signature to Mr. Brown's testimonial was requested, he refused, saying, that "he remembered very well the attack made on the character of Mr. Porter."

I have a proposal to make, which, if accepted, will put an end to all Mr. Brown's subterfuges and evasions, and bring him and me to close quarters.—Speaking of me and my witnesses, he says, that men, however clever, who wish to impose on the world, are prevented from attempting to do so near home. And elsewhere he asserts, that I did not dare to bring my charge before his Presbytery. As a manifestation of the timidity with which I am charged, I would address a few observations to the Presbytery of Route. One of your members has been not only accused, but publicly though not judicially convicted, of an offence which he himself has characterised as unpardonable. You must, at all events, be convinced, that the charge rests on grounds sufficient to justify a regular investigation. If you regard your cha-

racter as a Body, you will forthwith institute such investigation; and you will institute it in the town of Newtown-lemavady. There the witnesses reside, and there their characters are best known. If you object to Newtown-lemavady, I am willing to attend in the meeting-house of Aghadowey. Give me, and the accused, regular notice, and issue citations to those persons whom he or I may return to you as witnesses. Let those witnesses be all solemnly adjured, and then my learned opponent will have the benefit of that cross-examination for which he seems so anxious. I shall have the same advantage; and I tell him now, that many of the persons whom I will insist on having summoned, are amongst those individuals "who have borne such clear testimony in his favour." Mr. Brown is, I understand, the present Moderator of the Presbytery, and it rests with him to make the necessary preparatory arrangements. Heavy imputations have been lying on his shoulders for nearly five months, and is it not strange that he has waited for such a call as the present? Does this delay indicate conscious innocence?

Some persons have told me that I am wrong in submitting the matter to a tribunal so orthodox, and so likely to be partial to Mr. Brown, as the Presbytery of Route. I am unwilling to think so. At all events, competent Reporters shall be in attendance, and an appeal may ultimately be carried to the high court of public opinion. I will not say a disrespectful word of the Presbytery. One remark, however, I must take the liberty of making:—Shame is a thing which may be shared without being lessened.

Since writing the above, I have been favoured with a letter from another respectable individual, of which the following is a copy:—

To the Rev. William Porter.

SIR—However unwilling I am that my name should appear in the pamphlet of any party, I feel myself constrained by a sense of duty to add my testimony on the points at issue between you and the Rev. J. Brown. I listened with much satisfaction to Mr. Brown's sermon in Drnmachose, but I left the house under an impression that Mr. B. was in error regarding Griesbach's opinion of the text, I John, 5, 7. He *did lead me to believe*, that although Unitarians maintained that text to be an interpolation, that celebrated critic retained it as *genuine*.

It is more than probable, that after an interval of nearly three

years, I should have forgotten the circumstance, did not a conversation I held with you on the subject *a day or two after*, enable me to recal it to my recollection. I do not remember Mr. Brown's having made any personal "attack on you."

I am, Sir, &c.

CHARLES M'ALISTER.

Belfast, September 16, 1830.

In addition to all the foregoing evidence, I have in my possession two written statements fully and decidedly declaratory of Mr. Brown's guiltiness on *both* the charges exhibited against him—namely, his falsification of Griesbach, and his slanderous assertion in reference to myself. The writer of one of these statements, knowing that he was to be absent from this country for the ensuing nine months, and knowing also that a regular ecclesiastical investigation of the affair was likely to take place, at which, of course, all the witnesses would be examined, under a solemn adjuration, thought it right to give his testimony under the sanction of an obligation equally sacred, that it might thus be receivable by the Presbytery. Accordingly, on Monday, the 13th instant, he waited on one of the Magistrates of this town, and confirmed his statement by a formal affidavit. I am restrained by certain considerations from publishing either of the two documents now referred to. It is not necessary to do so—but both are forthcoming, and shall be submitted to the inspection of any person who may express a wish to see them.

The original documents, of which the foregoing are copies, have been shown to Mr. R. Dill, of Ballykelly, and will be shown to any member of Route Presbytery.

The matter stands thus:—The charge of falsehood with regard to Griesbach's retention of the disputed text, is supported by the testimony of Miss Hendrick, Rev. J. M'Laughlin, Dr. Moore, and Messrs. M'Kissack, Miller, M'Alister, and Proctor, for the letter of the last mentioned gentleman necessarily implies the preacher's misrepresentation of the standard edition of the Greek Testament. The double charge of falsehood and defamation is supported by the testimony of the same individuals, with the exception of Mr. M'Laughlin and Mr. Miller, who, though they do not recollect the attack on me, entertain no doubt of its having been made. Seven of the signatures attached to Mr. Brown's

testimonials are forgeries. Two were affixed from a motive which renders them nugatory. All his respectable witnesses, with whom I have as yet conversed, have declared themselves convinced of his guilt; and the documents which have changed their minds, will assuredly change the minds of others. The testimonials were misunderstood by most of the persons who signed them; and I venture to predict, that none will testify on oath what they have been insidiously induced to vouch for on paper. Should any one be so foolish as to persist in positively affirming, what he *cannot* with certainty know, his testimony would sink in its own weakness. I say, then, that Mr. Brown's criminality has been clearly established before the tribunal of public opinion; and will again be established before the proper ecclesiastical tribunal, if he accede to the proposal which has now been made—If he do not, he seals, with his own hand, the sentence of cendemnation. And what is the amount of the criminality virtually established against this unfortunate man?—He entered the house of prayer on the Lord's day, invoked the presence and guidance of the Spirit of Truth, and then, "whilst the book of life was spread open before him, and probably pressed by his hand, he deliberately uttered from the holy place, a calumnious falsehood, calculated, and apparently intended, to ruin a man who had never injured him." Hear his own account of his own crime, supposing it to have been committed:—"The hair rises on my head, and my knees tremble, and the blood runs cold to my heart—while my hand registers my belief that it would have been unpardonable." When charged with his delinquency he boldly and audaciously denied the charge. If what he himself says is true—if it be true, that such expressions as those imputed to him, are not to be found in the sermon which he now exhibits as the one delivered in Drumachose—and if it be true that he adhered closely to his written notes, then he must have practised falsification and forgery for the purpose of deception. When the charge was made good against him, instead of showing symptoms of shame or repentance, he foully slandered the respectable individuals by whose testimony it had been established—insidiously prevailed on a number of well-meaning people "to declare solemnly" what *he* knew to be an untruth

—and he has crowned his conduct by assuming the lofty bearing of an innocent and much injured man. He says, that he “has silenced Mr. Porter—asserts that Mr. Porter has been seen by the world to retreat from his positions—calls on Mr. Porter to repair the wrong he has committed, and retract charges which cannot be substantiated, and which Mr. Brown has proved to be evidently and certainly unfounded.” All these things indicate a combination of depravity, hypocrisy, and case-hardened effrontery, which has rarely been surpassed. Yet this man professes to “be renewed in the spirit of his mind;” calls himself a “faithful warder of Zion’s gates;” and is actually a member of the Synodical Committee, for promoting religious truth, and “reviving vital godliness” amongst the Presbyterians of Ulster.

Be it remembered, that I have been dragged by Mr. Brown, into this most disagreeable business. Had he acknowledged error respecting Griesbach, or had he even remained silent, the matter would have been lightly passed over, but by his injudicious attacks on my own character, and the character of my witnesses; he has absolutely compelled me to sink him deeper and deeper in disgrace.

Quos Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.

This infatuated man has courted his own undoing.—The affair has now assumed a serious, nay, an awful aspect. I feel the full responsibility of the situation into which I have been forced, but I have no alternative.—If called on by the Presbytery of Route, I will not shrink from the course which duty points out.

Mr. Brown has called for my retractation—it is now before him and the world.

WILLIAM PORTER.

Newtonlimavady, 20th Sept. 1830.

Dr. Moore’s Letter to the Rev. J. Brown, Aghadowey.

SIR,—As my name has been introduced in the controversy between you and Mr. Porter, and as you have directly impugned my veracity, I feel myself called on to state more at large, my recollection of that part of your Sermon which has given rise to this unpleasant Discussion, and my reasons for declaring your statement to be incorrect. I do assure you, Sir, my testimony on the subject was given with reluctance; but my sense of justice was appealed to, and I should have deservedly incurred the imputation of moral cowardice, had I

shrunk from a public attestation of that which I knew to be the truth, and which I had, in private company, oftener than once affirmed to be the truth.

Shortly after the Meeting of Synod in Strabane, Mr. Porter preached in his own Meeting-House a Series of Discourses on the much controverted doctrine of the Trinity. My attention was powerfully attracted to the subject, and I was consequently induced to read a good deal on both sides of the question. In one of Mr. Porter's Discourses, the authority of Griesbach was appealed to, as conclusive against the authority of 1st John, v,—7; and I remember well my having read at the time, an article on this subject, in the 65th Number of the *Quarterly Review*, in which a mass of evidence was adduced, to prove that the text was an interpolation. A series of Sermons in support of the Trinitarian Doctrine, were subsequently delivered in Mr. M'Laughlin's Meeting-house, at all of which I attended and took notes. I recollect perfectly well the arguments adduced by you in support of the authenticity of this text, and your distinct declaration, that Griesbach and many other eminent critics retained it as genuine. While the subject was fresh in my recollection, indeed the very evening after your Discourse was delivered, I mentioned to Mr. Porter this your extraordinary assertion, and it was not until after I had seen in Griesbach's edition of the new Testament, the verse rejected as spurious, that I became fully convinced of the inaccuracy of your statement. Owing to these circumstances the fact was imprinted on my memory, beyond the possibility of doubt.

I further recollect that you described Arians as a body who were in the habitual practice of resorting to such disgraceful expedients, in order to bolster up a falling cause; and that you alluded to Mr. Porter, pointedly and prominently as a person who had acted *thus shamefully*. But further still, in this famous Sermon, after hurling against your opponents with no sparing hand, such epithets, as “enemies to the truth,”—“defiers of human reason,”—“deniers of the Lord who bought them,” &c.—you proceeded to denounce them as men, with whom, however respectable in private life, no intercourse ought to be held; and this you did under the semblance of love for the immortal souls of your auditors. Never shall I forget, whilst memory holds her seat, the thrill of horror with which I heard you declare,—“That the murderous Indian gloating with fiendish exultation over the mangled remains of his victim, while its life's blood was fast ebbing, was but a faint emblem of the spirit by which Unitarians were actuated against the sacred Oracles and their defenders.”

There is much of personal allusion in your letter, of which I am convinced you cannot on reflection approve, nor will I stoop to take any farther notice of it.

I am yours, &c.

WILLIAM MOORE.

Newtownlemavady, Sept, 14, 1830.

FANATICISM,

UNDER the head of Intelligence, in the Sixth Number of "The Bible Christian," was a short article, entitled "The Progress of Fanaticism," the perusal of which suggested the following reflections, &c.:—

I believe that there is as much difference in the human mind, as there is in the human face, and that some imaginations are much more easily excited than others : in the same situation, therefore, and under the same external circumstances, the feelings and conduct of individuals are often widely different. This difference is manifested in religion, as well as in other matters ; and while some are calm, rational, and consistent in their opinions and devotional exercises ; others are wild, irregular, and extravagant. Religion is in itself a sublime subject of meditation ; and when it takes hold of a weak mind, and a strongly sensitive heart, its operations are wonderful and unaccountable—leading often to the most inconsistent and atrocious conduct, and mingling the most extatic feelings of piety, with even a contempt for morality. The fanatic mistakes the fervid workings of his own mind for the inspiration of heaven ; fancies himself a favourite with the Most High ; moves in a circle of imaginary spiritual loftiness, and deigns not to look on the humble and unpretending as a brother. Elated with a feeling which he thinks is not of this world, he flatters himself with the idea that he possesses higher endowments and more exalted gifts than others ; and presuming on superior *sanctified experiences*, he says to the meek and unobtrusive, "stand thou by for I am holier than thou." As every strong and powerful impulse of inclination is felt by the fanatic to be a communication from heaven—an order from above—they, of course, consider it their strongly bounden duty to obey, and hence many deeds of deep and deadly guilt have been perpetrated in the name, and for the glory of God. Every system of religion has been, and continues to be stained with this disgraceful blot ; and the annals of Christianity, in every country in which it is professed, have been occasionally written in blood. Under the destructive influence of fanaticism, the dagger of the assassin has wrought the work of death, and the dungeon has received its victim, never

again to breathe the balmy air, or "hail the holy light, offspring of heaven." The slow consuming flame has lighted up the last moments of the martyr at the stake; and contending parties, to establish their favourite opinions, have trampled on every law human and divine. Holy wars, as they have been impiously termed, have desolated happy lands and fertile fields, and carried misery and wretchedness along their relentless path. That frenzy of imagination from which fanaticism proceeds, has been felt in every age and in every clime; and, whilst almost every denomination of people have tasted the maddening cup, rancour and rapine have accompanied its steps, and devastation and blood have marked its progress. I might here refer to the historical records of all *civilized* nations, and more particularly to the tragic scenes exhibited during the reformation, when the minds of men, emancipated from the degrading yoke of popery, were unprepared to bear the blessings of liberty, and sprang up into the wildest excesses of cruelty and licentiousness. Freed from the thralldom of a long hereditary bondage, they flung from them, at the same time, the reins of prudence, and the restraints of pure religion, and gave full scope to all the fierce passions and sensual propensities of human nature; while they mingled the *language* of piety and prayer with the grossest outrages of virtue, charity, and mercy. Those days and those scenes are happily passed away, and, we hope, forever. We live in better times and under better auspices. The age is more refined, and men are more enlightened than to permit, or to be guilty of such enormous excesses. We are *beginning* to perceive that the wisdom which is from above is "peaceable and pure—gentle, and easy to be entreated—full of good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy—that its ways are pleasantness, and its paths are peace."

But even where Fanaticism is not displayed in such inhuman and anti-christian deeds—even where it is not clothed in the bloody garb of burning zeal and fiery persecution; yet it always assumes an aspect and conduct directly contrary to real piety and rational devotion. An air of spiritual pride and a tone of pharasaical arrogance; an appearance of familiarity with heaven; a particular indulgence in the language of social, friendly acquaintanceship with our Lord Jesus Christ; together

with an affected scorn of the pursuits and pleasures of ordinary life—mark to a certainty where the spirit of fanaticism dwells. That the secret and incomprehensible aid of divine grace is with the sincere servants of God in the faithful discharge of their duty, is recorded in the page of inspiration, and is what we humbly and devoutly implore from the “giver of every good and perfect gift;” but when men pretend to what they call the experience of the Spirit; when they talk of having received the gift of regeneration, and affect to describe the very time and place at which it was communicated, the manner in which it operates, and the peculiar sensations which it excites; when they express their conviction of being in a state of acceptance with their maker, and rise to the faith of assurance; when they presume to probe the hearts of others and pronounce on their condition with respect to God; on their having passed from death to life; on their reprobation or election; then we may safely set them down as being under the influence of distempered imaginations, or as the hypocritical deceivers of the ignorant and credulous, Fanaticism then, in its least offensive form, is any thing but amiable. There is an overweeningness about it, which, to every person endowed with common sense and a cultivated mind, must render it disgusting. Yet it has imposed, and continues to impose on many—many who have gone before us, and many who live in our own day have been its dupes, and are deceived and deluded by its pretensions. It pervades the pulpit and the press, breaks in on the harmony of social life, and sheds its baleful spirit on the happiness of the domestic circle. Preachers *affect* it—old maidens and boarding school misses *feel* it—the tea-table is its rallying point, and tracts, of the most vulgar and nauseous description, are the medium through which it is abundantly conveyed. No sooner is one source of the noxious torrent dried up, than another is opened, and forth rushes the tide, fatal to the existence of pure religion, as the waters of some lakes and rivers are said to be to animal life. I might here enumerate the several sects to which fanaticism has given rise, and mention some of their leading tenets; but this would occupy too much of your publication for the present month; and though the subject may be taken up at a future period, as affording a useful lesson to

every reflecting mind, and as proving the *paramount* importance of forming just notions of the nature and attributes of God ; I shall at present merely submit a few specimens, taken from the writings of some of those people to whom I have alluded. Those samples of charity, kindness, meekness, and rational christianity, have been collected chiefly from periodical publications, and might have been multiplied almost *ad infinitum*. I hastily pass over at present, such precious and edifying effusions as the following, which are to be found in great abundance in Rutherford's letter—

“ O ! if I could be a bridge over a water for my Lord Jesus to walk upon, and keep his feet dry.” “ O ! to be sweltering and swimming over head and ears in Christ's love.” “ Sometimes King Jesus sendeth me out a standing drink, and whispereth a word through the wall, and I am well content of kindness at the second hand—I confidently believe that there is a bed made for Christ and me, and that we shall take our fill of love.” “ I love to be kissed and sit on Christ's knee.” “ At my first entry hither, Christ and I agreed not well upon it—now he is content to kiss my black mouth, to put his hand in mine, and to feed me with as many consolations as would feed ten hungry souls. O for a long play day with Christ, &c. &c.’ This disgusting trash, with which, as I have already said, his letters abound, may, perhaps, in some measure, be accounted for by the manners and circumstances of the times in which he lived—but the following are of a more recent date :—

“ *Divine vengeance on a Card-playing Parson.*—A Clergyman was spending an evening, not in *wrestling* with his God, but at the card table, after stating that it was his turn to deal, he dropt down dead. It is worthy of remark (says the writer,) that within a very few years this was the third character in the neighbourhood which had been summoned from the card table to the bar of God.”—*Ev. Mag.* for 1807.

“ *A Bee the instrument of divine punishment on a Swearer.*—A young man is stung by a bee, gets into a passion thereupon, and utters the most dreadful oaths and imprecations. In the midst of his fury, one of the little creatures stung him on the tip of that unruly member (the tongue), which was then employed in blaspheming his maker. Thus can the Lord engage one of the mean-

est of his creatures in reproving the bold transgressor, who dares to take his name in vain."—*Ib.*

"*David Wright cured of Scrofula and Infidelity by one Sermon.*—David Wright was a man with scrophulous legs and atheistical principles ; being with much difficulty persuaded to hear one sermon from Mr. Coles, he limped to the church in extreme pain—was entirely converted—walked home with perfect ease, and never after had the slightest return of scrofula or atheism."—*Ib.*

"*An Innkeeper destroyed for having appointed a cock-fight, when service was beginning at a Methodist Chapel—A father, mother, three sons and a sister cut off by particular interposition—A dancing master for irreligion—Another person for swearing at a cockfight—A third for pretending to be deaf and dumb.*"—Meth. Mag. for 1827.

These are called *recent and authentic accounts* of God's avenging providence.

Brother Carey's Journal, July 7.—"Had much sweet enjoyment with God. Found much pleasure in reading Edwards' Sermon on the justice of God in the damnation of sinners. Had some *sweetness* to-day in reading Edwards' Sermon. I was enabled to *wrestle* with God in prayer, for many of my dear friends in England. I am now in my study ; and oh it is a sweet place, because of the presence of God with the vilest of men. It is at the top of the house ; I have but one window in it—Christ has begun to *bombard* this strong and ancient fortress, and will assuredly carry it."—Bapt. Miss. Society, vol. I.

Innumerable are the passages of the above description which might be presented to your readers, and many of them breathing a tenfold more fanatical spirit than any which I have quoted ; but I find that I have trespassed too far on your paper and on your patience, and these, therefore, may suffice for the present. J.

Intelligence.

The Remonstrant Congregation of Templepatrick entertained their Presbytery at dinner, on Tuesday, the 31st of August. The party consisted of 136 gentlemen, some of whom were Ministers of the Synod of Ulster, and many, members of the neighbouring congregations. The speeches on the occasion were numerous, as might be expected, and replete with good sense and good feeling. We regret very much that our friend, the Arithmetician of "The Orthodox Presbyterian," was not present, to count and to record the cheers. We hope he will not again neglect any similar opportunity of performing a duty, apparently so gratifying to himself and so truly edifying to the public. In the meantime we have the pleasure of informing him, that every thing was done decently and in order—that the greatest concord and good humour prevailed—that the tone of conversation indicated the greatest social confidence—and that clear-sighted as we are, we were not able to discern the marks of divine reprobation on any countenance present; this, to be sure, might be owing to our not yet having received the *new birth*.

REV. MR. M'LAUGHLIN'S REPLY TO THE REV.

JOHN BROWN.

We copy the following letter from "The Orthodox Presbyterian," and hope also, with the Editors of that work, that *we* will not be called on to pursue the subject farther. Indeed, we think that our present number will terminate the matter, and place before the public sufficient ground on which to form a judgment. We cannot help, however, expressing our opinion, that the "Heart Probing Committee" have some work cut out for them; and that a proper application of their *spiritual incision knife* might be highly useful to the Rev. John Brown.

To the Editor of the Orthodox Presbyterian.

SIR,—In reply to Mr. Brown's allusion to me in his last letter to Mr. Porter, I am perfectly astonished that, after being called to order three times last year in Synod, for using improper terms to express his ideas, he should again fall into the same error in writing which he had been guilty of in speaking. I will not pursue his plan in returning railing for railing; but will come closely to the point and state the conviction of my mind on the matter in dispute, and I care not what degree of credibility Mr. Brown or his friends may attach to it.

In a discourse delivered by the Rev. Mr. Porter, in speaking of the passage in 1 John v. 7, he asserted, that in Griesbach's edition of the Greek Testament, it was *rejected* as a spurious interpolation. In a sermon preached by the Rev. John Brown, on the Personality of the Holy Spirit, in speaking of the same passage, he said the learned Griesbach had *retained* it as genuine. As this subject of contradiction became a matter of conversation in many places, I

went to the only person in town who had the book, and there I acknowledged what I stated before the world, and from which I have never swerved. I neither come forward as the accuser nor betrayer of Mr. Brown; but, being called upon by both parties, I felt myself in honour bound to declare my conviction of the matter, leaving the world to judge; and had I refused to do so, evidence would have been produced, to show that I admitted the *fact*, in less than two weeks after the sermon had been delivered by Mr. Brown.

Besides, the matter does not rest with me, the tenour of the language was taken down by ladies and gentlemen who had no object to serve, and whose integrity no man will dispute. With regard to the names brought forward by Mr. Brown in his last letter, I am convinced many of them gave their testimony to the best of their recollection. As a session they would have nothing to do with it; seven of the names were affixed without the consent of the parties, two signed the declaration under the impression that they were opposing Arianism, (a system we all dislike—a system I have strained every nerve to oppose;) and the disappointed divine who acted as croupier to Mr. Brown in this matter, as well as some of those who signed the declaration, are convinced that my statement is correct. To that part of Mr. Brown's letter in which he endeavours to represent me as contemptible, I shall not descend to reply.

I am, &c. &c.

JOHN M'LAUGHLIN,

Newtownlimavady, 14th Sept. 1830.

Drumachose.

The confessions of a member of the Church of England.

In our last Number we gave a brief review of this work, accompanied with some extracts; and we have merely now to add, that we consider it a highly interesting Publication, well worth the attention and perusal of our readers.

On Sunday, 22d August the Rev. William Smith, the first licentiate of the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, commenced his public services as the Minister of the Unitarian Congregation of Dundee. In the morning, the Rev. George Harris conducted the worship, and preached on the duty of ministers and people. In the afternoon, the whole service was conducted by Mr. Smith, and a truly interesting service it was. His concluding observations, particularly, in which he spoke of his entrance on the ministry, and the peculiar trials and duties he should have to go through, were excellent and appropriate, and made apparently a great impression. May he be happy and successful; may the people abound in good and righteous works; may the truth of Christ Jesus be advocated fearlessly and embraced fervently, and may God be glorified.—*Christian Pioneer*.

Correspondents.

"A Remonstrant," "A Letter to Dr. Cooke," "A Unitarian Christian," and several other communications have been received, but came too late for our present Number. They shall all receive proper attention in due time.

The continuation of "Scripture its own interpreter" in our next.

THE
Bible Christian.

No. X.

NOVEMBER, 1830.

VOL. I.

To the Editor of the Bible Christian.

SIR,

The annexed letter may be deemed worthy of insertion in the pages of your excellent periodical. It was written by a member of the Congregation of Strand-street, in this City, lately deceased, to a lady with whose many amiable qualities illiberal sentiments are entirely at variance, and whose bigotry is to be ascribed, not to any deficiency of benevolence, but to the errors of a gloomy and unscriptural creed.

The writer of this letter was a lay gentleman, the head of a very extensive and prosperous establishment in Dublin, in which his time and attention were always actively engaged. But, amidst the toils and cares of business, he made it a point of conscience to devote much time to the study of his Bible; a duty to which he brought a mind remarkably free from prejudice, and gifted, in no ordinary degree, with sound sense and a penetrating judgment. Few persons were better acquainted with the Scriptures; and very few more clearly illustrated their practical influence in the conduct of life.

As the letter contains his views on a much contested point of theology, it may be interesting and instructive to many of your readers. The insertion of it will oblige yours

JAMES ARMSTRONG.

Dublin, October 15, 1830.

LETTER TO A BIGOT.

March 28, 1828.

MY DEAR MISS * * * * *

I called the other day to pay a short visit to our mutual and esteemed friend, Miss ———; which, from her avocations and mine, is a pleasure I seldom enjoy. You had favoured her with a call a short time before, and the

subject which had occupied both your thoughts became a natural topic of communication between us. With a sincerity not at all doubtful in a mind so benevolent as yours, you took occasion to deplore the danger of her spiritual state, and to express your apprehensions with an anxiety proportioned to the fervency of your regard for her, that *she stands on the brink of a precipice*. From the tenor of your conversation, no doubt could arise that this apprehension has been created by your knowing that she continues to be an unbeliever in the Trinity.

Before I proceed further, I must premise to you, that I am decidedly adverse to religious controversy. It is seldom, if ever, attended with the effects hoped for by either party : and it uniformly contributes to cherish and strengthen in the mind the very worst species of human pride—the pride of opinion. But there are some cases in which it is impossible to avoid it, and this I take to be one of them.

To what a height of presumptuous delusion must you have been able to work up your mind, when it admitted the thought that such a woman as Miss —— is, and ever has been, stands on the brink of perdition ! (for *precipice* and *perdition*, in this instance, are synonymous terms, the one can have no meaning distinct from the other :) a woman living in the practice of all the Christian graces, as far as human infirmity will permit !—in the constant exercise of piety to God, and in works of beneficence and charity to man ! How utterly irreconcilable must such a notion be with the precepts and commands of the Gospel of Christ !—and how entirely inconsistent with the kindly and benevolent feelings of your nature—vile and depraved as it is in your sight !

Allow me to ask by what authority you presume to judge the servants of Christ, or who gave you this authority ? “To his own master he standeth or falleth.” “Judge not, that ye be not judged ; for with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” “Let every one be fully persuaded in *his own* mind,” but not by the mind of another. The great Apostle of the Gentiles tells his Corinthian converts that he disclaims all dominion over their faith, and declares himself only the helper of their joy. And, on another occasion, when this unprivileged power had been exercised towards himself, he says—“It seemeth to me a very small

thing to be judged of you or of man's judgment: He that judgeth me is the *Lord*." When the meek and merciful Redeemer himself was applied to by his disciples for leave to call down fire from Heaven for the destruction of his enemies, his reply was, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of." The words of the Almighty are,— "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." And shall weak, and fallible, and erring man, in the plenitude of his presumption, grasp the thunderbolt of the most High,—and, in the face of such a declaration, usurp the prerogative of that God who reserves the exercise of this power to himself alone? What is the answer of our Saviour to those who declared that they had wrought miracles in his name, and, "in his name had cast out devils, and in his name had done many wonderful works?" "I never knew you. Not every one that saith unto me 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that *doeth* the will of my Father who is in Heaven."

There are none on whom we are permitted, or indeed, qualified to pass judgment but *ourselves*; and this duty we are enjoined to fulfil with a rigorous fidelity, for this declared and important purpose, namely, "that we be not judged."

We, (that is, the worshippers of the ONE ONLY LIVING AND TRUE GOD,) are frequently accused of indifference to the cause of religion; but it is not easy to draw the precise line between liberality of opinion, and indifference towards the object of it.

I have no doubt, if we felt ourselves at liberty to roll the thunderbolts of Heaven over the heads of our opponents, that we should more readily obtain credit for the warmth and sincerity of our zeal in our Christian profession. But, in so doing, we should incur the awful responsibility of becoming "judges of evil thoughts;" of assuming a power that belongeth only to the Searcher of hearts.

Having, I trust, sufficiently discussed the inadequacy of our powers and privileges for such an office, allow me to offer a few arguments, rational and Scriptural, for my belief in the simple Unity of the Deity.

Considering the Bible to contain the revealed will of God to man, I have, as it behoved me, been a careful and attentive reader of its contents:—and, I declare,

with the solemnity which should always accompany the avowal of so important a truth, that I do not find in the whole volume of Scripture, old and new, from beginning to end, such a phrase as a *Trinity* or a *Triune* God. It is a term of human coinage; and, like all human inventions, in God's good time, (to whom a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years,) it will, I firmly believe, dissolve and die away. Is it at all conceivable that the Almighty, in the revelation of his will and the discovery of himself to mankind, should have left this great and momentous question, (on the implicit belief of which you say the everlasting salvation of the human race depends,) a subject not of plain and clear discovery, but of inference and induction only?—Impossible!

The Unity of the Deity is the vital principle of all religion; and, in proof of it, the first discovery which the Lord God Omnipotent made of himself to mankind, contained this awful truth, proclaimed from Mount Sinai, amidst thunderings and lightnings and tempests, and every demonstration of almighty power. “Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is ONE Lord.” And in confirmation of this truth, the very exact words are reiterated by our Saviour himself, in reply to the inquiry made by the Scribe, as to which was the first and great commandment. The reply given by our Lord was, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is ONE Lord.”

To mould a declaration of this clear, distinct, and positive nature, containing the simple elements of our faith, and revealed to us under both dispensations, with circumstances of the most imposing grandeur, required much of that ingenuity, which has, from time to time, been employed in darkening and defacing the brightest manifestations which the Almighty has been graciously pleased to make of himself to his creatures. To reconcile us to the belief that Three are One, and One Three; that Father means a Son, and Son a Father; that the Sender and the Sent, the Giver and the Receiver, the Mediator and the power to whom the mediation is addressed,—are all one and the same: we are, in the first place, called upon to lay our understandings prostrate, preparatory to reconciling these incongruities; and to discard all claim to the possession of reason, that glorious and godlike attribute which assimilates man to his maker, and elevates

him above every other created being in this lower world. But thanks be to God through his beloved Son our Lord Jesus Christ ! we are not called upon to make this sacrifice. The language of Holy Writ is, "I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say." "Comparing spiritual things with spiritual." "Beloved, believe not every spirit; but try the spirits whether they be of God."—"Why do ye not of yourselves judge that which is right?" The charter of nobility which St. Paul conferred on the Bereans in contradistinction to those of Thessalonica, was, because "they examined the Scriptures daily, *to see whether these things were so.*" They took no man's word for their rule of faith, no, not even the Apostle's, until it had gone through the christian crucible, and been found to contain nothing irreconcilable with the general tenor of Scripture authority.

In compliance with this practice so honourable to the character of the Bereans, let us proceed in comparing Scripture with Scripture ; and, regardless of all deference to authorities merely human, examine how far the doctrine of the Trinity is explainable, or otherwise, on Scripture grounds.

It is said by our Saviour, "I and my Father are one." Now in order to understand this *one-ness* or *unity*, let us turn to the 17th chapter of the Gospel of John. After our Lord's affecting interview with his disciples, before he passed the brook Cedron, and had entered the garden where one of them was prepared to betray him, he addressed a prayer to his Heavenly Father, full of anticipations of his own approaching glory, and filled at the same time, with anxious solicitude for the disciples from whom he was about to separate, and the church which was to be confided to their care. His words are these, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word ; *that they may all be one* ;—as thou Father art in me, and I in thee,—that *they also may be one in us*, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory thou hast given me, I have given them, that *they may be one, even as we are one*. I in them, and thou in me, that *they may be made perfect in one.*" It is out of the power of language to convey a more clear and distinct definition of the union subsisting between the Father and the Son, than is contained in this chapter :—nor is it conceivable that a union, which

could not subsist between our Saviour and his disciples, could have formed the subject of the Redeemer's prayer to his and our Heavenly Father ;—which must have been the case, if he and the Father were one in the Trinitarian sense of that word. If there were no other text in Holy Writ explanatory of that union, this, I think, must suffice.

It is impossible to read this chapter of the Gospel of St. John, and at the same time believe it to be the inspired word of God, without rejecting both the Socinian and the Trinitarian hypothesis. The glory which he had with the Father before the world was, is there, as well as in many other parts of Scripture, pourtrayed in the clearest terms and the most glowing colours,—which can leave no doubt on the mind as to his pre-existent state of glory in the bosom of the Father ; and offers to our view a satisfactory explanation of those riches which he laid down when “he became poor for our sakes.”

The application of the term God to our Saviour, which occurs in several parts of Scripture, is best understood by a reference to parallel texts in which the same appellation is used. For instance, Moses is called a god unto Pharaoh ; and when St Paul, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, represents the Supreme God as addressing the Saviour, his words are—“But unto the Son he saith, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever. A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity ; therefore, God, even thy God, hath annointed thee with the oil of gladness, above thy fellows.” Here the term God is a distinctive appellation by way of eminence due to the Saviour's superior merit ; but defended from a possibility of mistake by representing the power and dignity attached to the title as *conferred by* and *coming from* that Supreme Being who was ALSO HIS GOD. If there be any thing farther necessary to explain the limited sense in which the term God is applied to our Saviour, it will be found in these words, “Though there be that are called Gods, whether in Heaven or in earth, for there be Gods many and Lords many ; but to us there is but ONE GOD, THE FATHER, of whom are all things, and we in him ; and ONE LORD Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.” “A mediator is not a mediator of one— but God is One.” When our Lord is represented as

being before all things—as being the head of all principalities and powers, as having all things put under his feet—HE who did put all things under him, is clearly and distinctly excepted, lest any mistake should arise on this point, (See 1 Cor. xv. chap.) And we must carry in our recollection that this power, dignity, and glory, are always spoken of as *given* to him. “The spirit was given to him without measure, because it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell, that in all things he should have the pre-eminence.”

In all our researches into the meaning of Scripture, we must be guided by a dispassionate enquiry into what is contained in the context. If this rule be unattended to, and the literal meaning of distinct phrases relied upon, I could undertake to prove Transubstantiation out of the New Testament, by the literal use of terms, in a way much more irresistible than can be employed in the proof of the Trinity. In this respect both tenets stand on the same ground, and are only to be explained and understood by the use of reason, the lamp lighted up by conscience, which God has graciously placed in the breast of every man, but which has been found so troublesome a companion when religion, the most important of all interests, becomes the subject of enquiry.

When our Lord, the night in which he was betrayed, instituted the ordinance of the last supper, in commemoration of his sufferings and death, he said, “Take, eat, this is my Body which is broken for you, &c.” Now the believers in the strange doctrine of Transubstantiation affirm that his words can bear no other meaning than a literal interpretation. It is in vain to argue that the very moment he delivered the bread and wine to his disciples he was then living, and in possession of his flesh and blood; and that the words could only be supposed to exhibit the bread and wine as the representative memorials of each. In reply, they refer us to another part of Scripture, in which he says “that they who do not eat his flesh and drink his blood have no life in them:” and that when his disciples were offended, and some of them departed from and walked no more with him, exclaiming, “This is a hard saying; will this man give us his flesh to eat?” our Saviour did not enter into any explanations of it as a figurative expression, but allowed them to depart under an impression that his words were to be ful-

filled in their strict and literal sense : and said to his disciples "will ye go also?" to which they replied, "Lord, whither should we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Now the conclusion to be drawn from reading this portion of Scripture, with the views we Protestants entertain of it, is this, that in numerous parts of Holy Writ we are under the necessity of considering the expressions contained in them as *figurative* and not *literal*. Otherwise, we should be involved in repeated contradictions, besides offering violence to the plainest dictates of reason and common sense. For example, without a constant reference to our reason for a guide, we should be obliged to believe that our Lord was "a door," "a vine," for so he terms himself; and that "out of the belly of his believers there should flow rivers of living water."

The UNITY OF THE DEITY is proclaimed, triumphantly proclaimed, in almost every page of Scripture. So often and so cogently is this doctrine enforced, that the Trinitarians themselves are obliged to acknowledge it, and to state that this also forms the foundation of *their* belief. But in order to make way for their favourite hypothesis, our Saviour is represented as composed of two natures; one (being the Deity) divine; the other human; for which, I aver, there is not the least shadow of an authority in the whole volume of Scripture; and which involves its believers in the most inexplicable difficulties. For instance, when our Saviour says "my Father is greater than I:" when he says upon being called Good Master, "there is none good but one, that is God;" when in reply to the inquiry of his disciples, as to the period at which the end of the world would come, his answer is, "of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels in Heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only."—

When they are called upon to reconcile these sayings, and many others of similar import, with the idea of his being the Supreme God, omnipotent and omniscient; their reply is. that these phrases have reference to his human nature only, in which he is acknowledged to be inferior to the Father: and, yet, in this state of imperfection and inferiority, with a marvellous inconsistency, they represent the worship paid to him as the worship due to the One only living and true God. The words he addressed to his disciples after his resurrection, and previous to his ascension into Heaven, are these,

“ I ascend to *my* Father and *your* Father, to *MY* God and *YOUR* God.”

With such a cloud of witnesses, with the positive command of our Lord himself to pray to the Father in his name, and through his mediation, is it not truly wonderful that the pure religion of Jesus Christ,—for the establishment of which on earth his precious blood was shed,—should be still darkened and debased by “ the hand-writing of ordinances :”—the object of whose life and death was “ to take them away, nailing them to his cross ?”

Great and important as this subject is, both to your consideration and mine, I shall bespeak your attention, further, to one argument, which is, in my mind, conclusive of *our obligation to worship ONE GOD only*. It is written, and no Trinitarian will deny me the use of this Scripture, “ That God is a spirit ; and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.” It is manifest from this, that whatever may be the number of persons, into which the imaginations of men may choose to divide it, “ it is the Spirit which giveth life,” and is alone the object of worship. In personifying the Spirit, you may be mistaken ; but, in addressing that spirit which constitutes the Deity, you cannot be mistaken. In doing so, we comply with the command delivered to us, and thereby avoid all possibility of error.

I hope and trust, my dear Miss ——— that enough has been already said, to show that nothing contained in the Scriptures can warrant the conclusion, that those who believe in the simple Unity of the Deity are in danger, on that score at least, of suffering the judgment of eternal fire. On reading the voluminous answer of Mr. Carson, to Dr. Drummond’s pamphlet, I was forcibly struck with this opinion, set forth in its very worst and most objectionable shape, and in a way, whatever may be the strength of his confidence in the truth of his own tenets, that cannot fail to dishonour whoever professes to be a teacher of the Gospel of Christ.—He says, “ He would rather be the veriest prostitute—the disgraced and infected inhabitant of the lowest brothel, than be Dr. Drummond, with all the amiable qualities he possesses !!! He would rather be a Thurtell, (the sanguinary and premeditated murderer of his fellow man,) than be Dr. Priestly ;” !!!—thus, giving to in-

voluntary error, a rank in crime surpassing the most atrocious deed that human imagination could devise, or human depravity perpetrate. And this is the language of one who professes himself to be, not a follower of the meek and merciful Saviour, but a *teacher of his religion* ! —the religion of him whose appearance in this world was celebrated by the Heavenly Host, and proclaimed by them as the harbinger of “peace on earth and good will to men,”—of him, who “broke not the bruised reed nor quenched the smoking flax.”

Such are the unhallowed means resorted to by the advocates of this doctrine, for operating on weak and timid minds ; and their success has, in numerous instances, been equal to their warmest wishes. “O my soul, come not into their secret councils ; nor, mine honour, be united to their assemblies !”

Adieu, my dear Miss ——— ; believe me, I feel the deepest and most sincere regret, that your candid and liberal mind should enlist itself under such banners ! and consent to become a practitioner in this Anti-christian school of denouncement.

Yours very faithfully,

FOR THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

Under the signature of *A Member of the Established Church*, a writer in “*The Orthodox Presbyterian*” for August, has ventured to limit the *Power* of the *Almighty*, (proh pudor atque nefas !) in communicating his attributes ; and to define the degree, in which they were conferred on our Lord. His argument is grounded upon that much abused text ; “My Glory will I not give to another ;” omitting, as usual with such writers, the corresponding clause, “nor my praise to graven Images ;” which imports no more than this : “I will not allow the Glory and Praise, which are due to me, to be given to Idols,” as is plain enough to every one, who has attended to the parallelism of the Scripture style. He infers from the exercise of Divine Power by Jesus, that he is the Supreme God. He may say the same of Moses and all the Prophets, for they were all indued with delegated Power.

Instead of embarking in such profane and presumptuous inquiries, I shall appeal to one, whose authority neither of us will dispute. Our Lord himself is so explicit on this subject, that nothing can be added to his words, "Hear and understand."

"All power (says he,) is *given* unto me in Heaven and in Earth;" "All things are *delivered* unto me of my Father;" [but] "of mine own self I can do nothing." Matt. xxviii. 18. xi. 27. John v. 30.

The Father gave him a Kingdom; [but,] to sit on his right hand, and on his left in his Kingdom, was not in the power of the Son to give; but to those, for whom it was prepared by his Father; and the Kingdom was finally to be given up to his Father.—Matt. xx. 23. 1 Cor. xv. 24.

"The Father hath *committed* all judgment to the Son, and hath *given* him authority to execute judgment also;" [but,] "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, *I judge*, and my judgment is just, *because* I seek not mine own will, but the will of my Father, who hath sent me." —John v. 22. 27. 30.

"I have power to lay down my life and to take it up again;" [but,] "this *commandment* I have received of my Father." "As the Father has life in him, so hath he *given* the Son to have life in himself."—John x. 18. v. 26.

"I must preach the glad tidings of the kingdom of God;" [but] "my doctrine is not mine, but his who sent me." "The words, which I speak unto you, I speak not of myself." "I have not spoken of myself; but the Father, who sent me, he hath given me *commandment* what I should say and what I should speak. Whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak."—Luke, iv, 43.—John vii, 16.—xiv, 10.—xii, 49.

"Whence has this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?" "I do nothing of myself; as the Father hath *taught* me, I speak these things." "The Father who dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." "I cast out Devils by the spirit of God."—Matt. xiii. 54.—John, xiv, 10.—xvii, 6, 8.

"Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming; and of the end of the world?" "Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the

angels which are in heaven, neither the *Son*, but the Father only.”—Matt. xxiv, 3.—Mark, xiii, 32.

“Good Master, what shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life? Jesus said unto him; why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God.” “My Father is greater than I;—my Father is greater than all.” Mark, x. 18.—John, xiv, 28.—x. 29.

“Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Where two or three are gathered together, there am I in the midst of them;” [but] “*I go away and come again* unto you.” “It is expedient for you, that *I go away*.”—Matt. xxviii, 20.—John, xiv, 28.—xvi, 7.

“Lord, teach us to pray.” “When ye pray, say, our Father, who art in heaven.” “In that day, ye shall ask me nothing. Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.”—Luke, xi, 2.—John, xvi. 23.

This writer may now see the vanity of his bravado, and the temerity of his challenge. He ascribes to the Son, in their full extent, and of his own right, omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence; but it appears from our Saviour’s own words, (*non meus hic sermo*,) that whatever portion of these he enjoyed, was bestowed upon him, and that he possessed nothing that he did not receive. These properties are never ascribed to Christ in Scripture, either expressly or by implication. The terms do not even occur in the New Testament.—We meet, indeed, with Omnipotent and Almighty in *Revelation*; but they are there unquestionably appropriated to the Father. (See iv. 8. xv. 3. xvi. 7. 14. xix. 6. 11. xxi. 22.) Our Lord disclaims these attributes himself, and is so far from requiring *worship*, that he forbids prayer to be offered to him, even after his resurrection, and desires his disciples to pray to the Father only. Creation was not an act of omnipotence, but of delegated power. “By him *God* created the worlds.” (Heb. i. 2.) Presiding over his church, or being present with two or three disciples, and going away and coming again, is not the omnipresence of him, who fills all space at all times. His having life in himself by the *Gift* of his Father is not the self-existence of the First Cause of all things.

The same answer may serve for a paper, full of shameful and wilful misrepresentations, in “The Orthodox Presbyterian” for September, signed J. F. On such oc-

casions it is customary for writers of this stamp, to resort to the detected trick, and exploded subterfuge of playing the Divine and human nature of Christ against each other. Such artifices and equivocations, calculated to blind the reader and favour the escape of the writer are well characterized, and happily exemplified in the *Cuttle Fish* by the *Elder's Son*, in the last number of the *Bible Christian*. A curious question on this subject has been lately agitated by Mr. Irving, both in England and here. His heresy has brought down upon him the displeasure of the London Presbytery; some of our Orthodox Journals also have fallen upon him for asserting the peccability of Christ's human nature; but, our Calvinistic Periodical, "*The Orthodox Presbyterian*," is unaccountably silent; perhaps from shame and mortification at the disappointment and disgust excited by the strain of his preaching, throughout this country, among pious people of all descriptions.*

After all, his doctrine appears to me to be in perfect

* "The Rev. EDWARD IRVING, A.M.—At a private meeting of the Scots Presbytery, lately held at the vestry of the Scotch Church, London-wall, various members delivered their opinions on the doctrine of Christ's humanity, in conformity with the standards of the church of Scotland. The results of the sentiments of Presbytery against the sinfulness of Christ's humanity, having been summed up by the Rev. John Crombie, A. M., with that lucidness of arrangement and discrimination by which he is distinguished, Mr. Irving, with his usual openness to conviction, avowed his concurrence in the decision of the Presbytery: with the greatest *naïveté* imaginable he said, 'Gentlemen, be it so.' This is just what we expected from our knowledge of the Rev. Gentleman's intellectual character. Mr. Irving delights in trying his strength in any thing out of the beaten path, especially if it seems new, mysterious, difficult, or extravagant. Having amused himself with the seeming prodigy—excited wonder, terror, fear, inquiry, and laughter—set people to writing, preaching, ranting, and raving—rendered the doctrine a topic of discussion at every tea table, and made every one think and speak more intelligibly and accurately on the subject than himself, he flings it away as unworthy a place in his creed or his conscience. When an opinion has lost the grace of novelty, or the grace of antiquity, and what is with him of more consequence, the air of mystery; when it is palpably intelligible and vulgarized, it has no charms for him: he no longer writes against his opponents—no longer fulminates his anathemas at such as are reluctant in giving their assent; but having set the zealots by the ears, he laughs at their insanity and stupidity."—*The World*.

harmony with the Calvinistic Trinitarian system. If the human nature of Christ consist of a human soul and body, and "all things appertaining to man's nature," it must have been liable to sin. If Jesus was *very man* as well as *very God*, his human part must have been tainted with the original stain, and subject to actual sin; except the *immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin*, or some other Popish device be adopted, to evade the difficulty. Whether it still retains these imperfections in heaven, or how it has got rid of them, I leave to deeper Divines to discuss.

*Non nostrum est tantas componere lites.**

In short, the whole is a mere fiction, equally destitute of foundation in Scripture, and inconsistent with common sense. It is ridiculed by Lucian in one of the short dialogues commonly read in schools. It is very sinful in Orthodox Divines to expose Sacred subjects to well-founded ridicule, to hide their own inconsistencies. Christ had but one nature, which he brought from Heaven, which was equally incapable of sin with other celestial natures. As for the flesh, with which it was clothed, that could no more sin, than his robe or his sandals.

ERASMUS.

P.S.—This article was sent to press before the writer had seen the disgusting proceedings of the Scotch Presbytery in London, on the 20th of October, when Religion was deeply "wounded in the house of her Friends," and Mr. Irving withdrew from the Presbytery.

To the Editor of the Bible Christian.

SIR,

Having been deeply impressed by the earnestness, sincerity, humility and candour, with which those great and good men, Locke, Milton, Whitby, and Taylor of Norwich, were guided in inquiries that terminated

* "The Son — took *man's nature* in the womb of the blessed Virgin, of *her substance*, so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the godhead and the manhood, were joined together in one person, *never to be divided*, whereof is one Christ, *very God and very man*.—Christ did truly rise again, from death, and took again his body, with flesh, bones, and *all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature*, wherewith he ascended into Heaven, and *there sitteth*."

in their zealous advocacy of Unitarian sentiments, I thought that some brief extracts, expressive of the principles on which they prosecuted their investigation of Scripture, would be interesting and instructive. In particular, the perusal of these passages *ought* immediately to silence those uncharitable disputers who have the presumption to arrogate to themselves an infallible certainty in all their doctrines—and to doom to everlasting perdition all those who differ in a single iota from their creed. The pre-eminent abilities of these men are well known—the following extracts will show that they are not less honourably distinguished by their moral qualities. Can then the Almighty have decreed that such men as these, applying to his word the most eminent talents, the deepest research, with the most intense earnestness, fervent piety, and humble desire to find the truth as it is in Jesus, should be doomed to inconceivable and interminable torments in a future world? Can we find any thing analogous to this in the whole course of the Divine Government of the world, as made known by nature or revelation? Is it possible to utter a greater calumny against the Governor of the Universe? If by blasphemy we mean dishonouring the Divine Being, can we think of any thing more blasphemous than such a notion? If self-sufficiency be a sin, what can be a more sinful form of it than to arrogate to one's self infallibility in the truth of his own opinions, and a power of dictating the final destiny of all who differ from them?

V. D. M.

LOCKE, in the Preface to his Reasonableness of Christianity, &c. says,—“The little satisfaction and consistency that is to be found in most of the systems of Divinity I have met with, made me betake myself to the sole reading of the Scripture, (to which they appeal,) for the understanding of the Christian Religion. What from thence, by an attentive and unbiassed search, I have received, reader, I deliver to thee. If by this, my labour, thou receivest any light or confirmation in the truth, join with me in thanks to the Father of light for his condescension to our understanding. If, upon a fair and unprejudiced examination, thou findest I have mistaken the sense and tenor of the Gospel; I beseech thee, as a true Christian, in the spirit of the Gospel, (which is that of charity,)

and, in the words of sobriety, set me right in the doctrine of Salvation.

MILTON, in the Preface to his Treatise on the Christian Doctrine, says,—“ For myself, I hold to the Scriptures alone: I follow no sect or party. Of heretics, as they are called, I had read none of the writings; but the incautious handling of the Scriptures among those who are accounted orthodox, and their various blunders, first taught me to agree with their opponents, so often as those opponents agreed with the Scriptures. If this be heresy, of a truth I confess with Paul, Acts xxiv. 14, *that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets*; and, I add, all things that are contained in the books of the New Testament. Other judges, or sovereign interpreters of the Christian faith, in common with the whole Protestant Church, I reject; together with that faith which is called implicit.

“ What remains then, brethren, but that ye cultivate truth with brotherly love; judge of what I have said as the spirit of God shall direct you; adopt my opinions, or, if you are not moved thereto by a full assurance and by the clear testimony of the Scriptures, reject them. Finally, live in the faith of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Farewell.”

And again, “ If indeed I were a member of the Church of Rome, which requires implicit obedience to its creed on all points, I should have acquiesced from education or habit in its simple decree and authority, even though it denies that the doctrine of the Trinity, as now received, is capable of being proved from any passage of Scripture. But since I enrol myself among the number of those who acknowledge the word of God alone as the rule of faith, and freely advance what appears to me much more clearly deducible from the Holy Scriptures than the commonly received opinion, I see no reason why any one who belongs to the same Protestant or Reformed Church, and professes to acknowledge the same rule of faith as myself, should take offence at my freedom, particularly as I impose my authority on no one, but merely propose what I think more worthy of belief than the creed in general acceptation. I only entreat that my readers will ponder and examine my statements in a spirit which desires to discover nothing but the truth, and with a mind

free from prejudice. For without intending to oppose the authority of Scripture, which I consider inviolably sacred, I only take upon myself to refute human interpretations as often as the occasion requires, conformably to my right, or rather to my duty as a man. If indeed those with whom I have to contend were able to produce direct attestation from heaven to the truth of the doctrine which they espouse, it would be nothing less than impiety to venture to raise, I do not say a clamour, but so much as a murmur against it. But inasmuch as they can lay claim to nothing more than human powers, assisted by that spiritual illumination which is common to all, it is not unreasonable that they should on their part allow the privileges of diligent research and free discussion to another inquirer, who is seeking truth through the same means and in the same way as themselves, and whose desire of benefiting mankind is equal to their own.

“In reliance, therefore, upon the divine assistance, let us now enter upon the subject itself.”

Dr. WHITBY, in the Preface to his “*Last Thoughts*,” a most important and valuable work, uses the following solemn, impressive, and affecting language;—

“When I wrote my Commentaries on the New Testament, I went on (*too hastily*, I own,) in the common beaten road of other reputed orthodox divines; conceiving *first*, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in one complex notion, were one and the same God, by virtue of the same individual essence, communicated from the Father. This confused notion, I am now fully convinced to be a thing *impossible*, and full of gross absurdities and contradictions. And this my retractation, or change of my opinion, after all my former endeavours to assert and establish a contrary doctrine, deserves the more to be considered, because it proceeds (and indeed *can* proceed) from no other reason, but purely from the strong and irresistible convictions which are now upon me, that *I was mistaken*.

“Nothing, I say, but the love of truth, can be supposed to extort such a *retractation* from me, who, having lived so long beyond the common period of life, can have nothing else to do but to prepare for my great change; and in order thereunto, to make my peace with God, and my own conscience, before I die. To this purpose I solemn-

ly appeal to the Searcher of hearts, and call God to witness, whether I have *hastily* or *rashly* departed from the common opinion; or rather, whether I have not *deliberately* and *calmly* weighed the arguments on both sides, drawn from Scripture and antiquity.

“So that, upon the whole, if I have erred in changing my opinion, I desire it may be observed, that my error hath neither prejudice nor secular views to support it; and that my mistake, if such it will be reputed, hath been all along attended with constant prayers to the Throne of Grace, and what hath always appeared to me to be the strongest reason, and undeniable evidence.”

Dr. JOHN TAYLOR, of Norwich, always prefaced his Lectures on Theology with the following charge:—

I. “I do solemnly charge you in the name of the God of Truth, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life, and before whose judgment seat you must in no long time appear; that in all your studies, and enquiries of a religious nature, present or future, you do constantly, carefully, impartially, and conscientiously attend to evidence, as it lies in the Holy Scriptures or in the nature of things and the dictates of reason; cautiously guarding against the sallies of imagination and the fallacy of ill-grounded conjecture.”

II. “That you admit, embrace, or assent to no principle or sentiment by me taught or advanced, but only so far as it shall appear to you to be supported and justified by proper evidence from Revelation or the reason of things.”

III. “That if at any time hereafter, any principle or sentiment by me taught or advanced, or by you admitted and embraced, shall, upon impartial and faithful examination, appear to you to be dubious or false; you either suspect, or totally reject such principle or sentiment.

IV. “That you keep your mind always open to evidence—that you labour to banish from your breast all prejudice, prepossession, and party zeal—that you study to live in peace and love with all your fellow Christians; and that you steadily assert for yourself, and freely allow to others, the unalienable rights of judgment and conscience.”

TO THE REV. HENRY COOKE, D.D. &c. &c.

Reverend Sir,

I am induced to trouble you with a letter, at present, from a variety of reasons, but more especially from the prominent part which you have acted as the champion of Orthodoxy in this neighbourhood, and as the *leader* of the *Orthodox and Reformed Synod of Ulster*. In "*The Orthodox Presbyterian*," a work *deservedly of unparalleled celebrity*, that body, and its proceedings, are characterised in a way which subjects you and your previous statements to very heavy charges indeed ; or its conductors to the imputation of having deliberately published what is untrue. In a late Number, a goodly picture is drawn of the edifying spectacle exhibited by the Synod at its last meeting, "*purified from Arian taint, and like brethren dwelling together in unity and love.*" For the sake of your character, I trust the statement is unfounded, and that you will never allow peace to be found in the body, so long as one individual holding Arian sentiments, or one man of an unsanctified heart, is known to exist in it. If you are a man of truth, how could you, after the repeated solemn declarations you have formerly made, cease to raise your voice against heresy and vice ; but, above all, how could you join league with them, and allow them to remain *at peace* in the body to which you are united? Do, therefore, Rev. Sir, free yourself from the imputations which are heaped upon you with no sparing hand, by your friends and opponents, otherwise incalculable mischief must not only fall upon you, but upon your cause. There is no character or cause so good as not occasionally to require defence, and you have exposed yours to so many apparent inconsistencies, that a defence is particularly required. I shall proceed to lay before you the charges of inconsistency, and want of truth, to which the late statements in "*The Orthodox Presbyterian*" expose you.

As a Minister of the Gospel, you ought to have the highest possible reverence and veneration for the sanctity of an oath. Now you have solemnly sworn "*that you believed there were 35 Arians in the Synod ;*" and when afterwards, in that body, you were taunted with having sworn *that which was not*, you offered to take the

list of the Synod, and place your finger upon the names of the persons to whom you referred. This was honest and straightforward. Now, Sir, I take it for granted, that you have sworn the truth.

Suppose, therefore, that all the 17 ministers who have since separated from the Synod were in your contemplation at the time you made the oath, and included in the number to which you swore, there will still remain in that body 18 whom you believe to be Arians. If not, what have you done with them? You have not strangled them without a groan to fall upon our ear. We hear something of the 17 Remonstrants—not one word of the 18 that remain with you. They are gagged or chop-fallen, but still you know they are *among* you. *You have sworn it.* And yet “The Orthodox Presbyterian” dares to come forward and publish to the world an account of the goodly and edifying spectacle of unanimity, soundness in the faith, and brotherly love, at present to be found in the Synod; though the statement, if true, places you before the world, either as having sworn in error, or as having deliberately violated declarations, made with all the solemnity of an oath, “that you could not hold ministerial communion with Arians.” Your opinions of Arianism and of Arians are well known, both from your public harangues and your private admonitions; they are recorded both from the pulpit and the press. You have again and again entreated them to separate from you in peace; as you had no wish to injure them either in their character or emoluments. All you wished was a peaceful separation. My object at present is not to inquire how far you have fulfilled these peaceful declarations so publicly made. But you have repeatedly declared you could not hold ministerial communion with Arian ministers; yet, you do *now meet with them in your Church Judiciaries and hold ministerial communion with them.* *You have sworn it.* You have not forgotten your awfully solemn declaration in Synod respecting the Presbytery of Templepatrick, “that your connexion with an Arian Presbytery had inflicted a wound upon your conscience, which nothing but the blood of Christ could cleanse.” Now, Sir, you can associate, unmoved, with Arians *to the amount of almost twice the number of that Presbytery.* And, what is still more remarkable, there is not at present *one word* about a wounded conscience,

or the need of the blood of Christ in consequence of such communion. It is strange how soon the consciences of some men can become *seared* and *dead* to what, but a short time before, if we may credit their own statements, caused them the most exquisite pain. Are Sir, the expressions, "a wounded conscience," and "the blood of Christ," with you mere phrases of mockery, which you employ as clap traps to accomplish your own private ends? For at present, not contented with holding ministerial communion with *Arian Ministers*, you boast of the purity of the body and of its goodly and peaceful demeanour in consequence of its freedom from Arianism; and yet *you have sworn that you believe 18 Arians* still belong to your communion.

Arians have been characterised by you, under a most awful and forbidding aspect; as "soul destroyers," as "deniers of the Lord who bought them,"—men of the impious audacity to dare with presumptuous hand, to "pluck the crown from the brow of the Eternal." And yet you meet with such men in your church judicatories, you join with them in ministerial communion, you call them brethren,—aye, and brethren in the Lord!! The denier of the Lord that bought him, your brother—and your brother in the Lord! The soul destroyer is your brother in the Lord! Sir, have you ever thought of one immortal soul destroyed, consigned to endless misery—the wrath of God upon it for ever? And have you thought of the awful guilt of him who could wilfully accomplish that destruction? Who, not satisfied with destroying his own soul, would drag to eternal perdition *the child of his affection, the wife of his bosom*.—And yet this man is your brother!! And reckless of consequences, you allow 18 such soul-destroyers to stalk abroad upon society, and to drag with them all they can to eternal misery. Nay, you stretch out to them the hand of brotherly love, and press them as brothers to your bosom; and "The Orthodox Presbyterian" holds up the body, in which 18 such men are, according to your own oath, to be found, "as reformed, purified, and affording an edifying spectacle of love and peace." This will not do; to use your own elegant phrase, "it is too bad." Unless you account for this inconsistency, men will conclude, that all you have previously done, was from private pique, personal animosity, and to promote your own

aggrandisement. They will say, there were men in the Synod whom your domineering spirit could not *brook*, because it could not *bend*; but having once thrown them from among you, and surrounded yourself with “craven, crouching slaves,” your end was answered; and that all you previously did and said to accomplish their overthrow was mere cant and profession. The reason is plain; you still retain among you, men, who to the delinquencies, according to your judgment, of those whom you have forced to leave you, add the guilt of crouching, fawning hypocrisy. And you retain them *only because they are such*, and for *such things you call them brethren!* Beware, beware! there is such a crime as “loving the praise of men more than the praise of God;” and it must be confessed that the “statistics” of a late number of “The Orthodox Presbyterian” savour too much of this.

Orthodox members of the Synod of Ulster, are ye such men? Are ye the characters, the conductors of “The Orthodox Presbyterian” would represent you? Your reprobation of Arian principles, and your desire to separate from Arians, were expressed in no very measured terms. They were according to you “Deists,” “Infidels,” “Atheists,” &c. &c. Why do you associate and hold ministerial communion with such men!! “Why do you heal lightly the wounds of my people saith, the Lord?” “Why do you proclaim peace, peace, when there is no peace?” Your leader hath sworn that such is your state.—You *have acquiesced in it*; never contradicted it; and must therefore believe it. You have commenced what you call a good work. Why do you stop short in that reformation of which you boast? Is it because you one step farther on dare not go than your leader gives permission? How are the mighty fallen! How are the strong brought low! Believe me, you must share with your leader in the charge of inconsistency and the most solemn insincerity, if you permit the men, who are *sworn to be among you*, still to remain, and thus allow your church to be regarded as the receptacle for those whom you must consider polluted and unprincipled. But of this you shall hear farther in my next.

In conclusion, Sir, do not *skulk* under the *insincere pretences* which your friends represent you as sometimes making; that you not do see and never read the charges preferred against you, and that you could answer them if

you pleased. You are well known to see and read them; and whenever an opportunity occurs of pouncing upon an unguarded expression, you are ready to seize the opportunity. If this remain *unanswered*, it will be set down as *unanswerable*; and that the charges of your opponents, and the suspicions of your friends now set before you in a "tangible shape" are established. I await your reply. Stand forward and defend yourself if you can, as a man of consistency, in holding ministerial communion with Arians; as a man of truth upon your oath,—for there are such in the body to which you belong, and with whom you hold communion. In my next you shall hear from me, on your communion with those publicly proclaimed hypocritical and profane. W.

August 27th, 1830.

THE REMONSTRANT SYNOD, AND "THE
ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN ;"

*Including some account of the Rev. Edward Irving's
recent exhibitions in Belfast.*

(Continued from page 384.)

I continue my review of *The Orthodox Presbyterian's* abusive attack upon the Resolutions of *the Remonstrant Synod*, in order to expose the ten-thousand-times repeated fallacies and mis-statements, by which a large portion of the Presbyterians of Ulster have been deluded, and deprived of their natural and Christian rights. In my former communications, I fully exhibited the gross errors of the Orthodox Oracle's "Statistics," cleared away the mass of rubbish which he had heaped upon the first three Resolutions of the Remonstrants, and exposed the daring perversions of reason, of facts, and of Scripture, by which he laboured to injure others, and to support his own rotten cause. At present, I shall proceed in the same course of necessary but irksome exposure; although it is melancholy, that, in the nineteenth century, and in a Reformed Church, such a task should be required. The *Fourth Resolution* of the Remonstrant Synod runs thus:

IV.—" That the imposition of human Tests, and Confessions of Faith, and the vain efforts of men to produce an unattainable uniformity of belief, have not only tended to encourage hypocrisy, but also

to restrict the sacred right of private judgment,—to lessen the authority of the Scriptures,—to create unrighteous divisions amongst Christians,—to sanction the most barbarous persecutions,—to trench upon the natural and civil rights of men,—to place undue power in the hands of the few,—to throw a shield over the time-server,—to expose the honest to injuries and persecutions,—to perpetuate errors in almost all Churches,—and to prevent that free inquiry and discussion, which are essential to the extension of religious knowledge.”

To assail the mighty truths contained in this Resolution, in the face of reason, and history, and universally admitted facts, was too bold an enterprise, even for “The Orthodox Presbyterian.” The *fortress*, he clearly saw, was altogether impregnable; and he endeavoured to cover his retreat, and to make his followers believe that he was not defeated, by firing a few blank shots at one of the *out-posts*. He avers, “that uniformity of belief *is* attainable, that the Holy Spirit commands it, and that Paul prays for it.” In support of this position, he, as usual, perverts two portions of Scripture: for, when the Apostle exhorts the Roman converts “to be like-minded,” and the Corinthians “to be perfect and of one mind,” evidently implying a unity of *purpose* and *affection*, not of *belief*, he triumphantly exclaims, “here is my authority for demanding a uniformity!” But did he not *know*, that in the passages referred to, the Apostle made no allusion whatever to *faith*, and that his sole object was to promote social unanimity and good will? So far from sanctioning any such visionary theory, Paul uniformly reprobates it—“those that are weak in the faith receive, but *not* unto doubtful disputations: this is a faithful saying, and these things I will that you affirm *constantly*, that they which have believed in God be careful to maintain *good works*; for these things are good and profitable unto men; but, avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and *contentions about the law*; for they are unprofitable and vain.” Nay, did not the writer *know*, that even the inspired Apostles were not always “of one mind,” upon certain minor points: and that, “at Antioch, Paul withstood Peter to the face, because he was to be blamed?” But, were it even true, that Scripture supported, instead of contradicting, the theory of a uniform faith, which is equally at variance with the nature and experience of man, “The Orthodox Presbyterian” would gain nothing for his cause, unless he could prove, that the *unrevealed* dogma of the Trinity, and the Five

unrevealed and self-contradictory Points of Calvinism, are the Doctrines on which men are required to entertain *one faith* ! Let him prove, on the clear testimony of God's Holy Word, that I am bound to believe with him in the Trinity, Original Sin, Election and Reprobation, Effectual Calling, Justification by Faith alone, the Damnation of Infants and Heathens, and the other revolting dogmas of his gloomy system,—let him do this, or prove, in some distinct way, that he is inspired, and commissioned from on High to regulate the faith and conscience of his brethren, and I shall at once submit to his instruction and authority. But, until he give these unequivocal proofs, he must pardon me for declining his dictation, and even venturing to *hint*, that I have just *as good a right* to demand of *him* an implicit acquiescence in *my* creed, under the penalty of teasing, calumny, and temporal privation, as *he* has to make such a demand of *me* ! It will not mend the matter for him to declaim as usual “about the power and authority of the Church :” for I must then put the old question, which he has never yet *condescended* to answer—“*What Church?*” Is it the Lutheran Church, the Greek Church, the Romish Church, the English Church, the Scotch Church, the Ulster “heart-probing” Church, or the Methodist Church? Would “The Orthodox Presbyterian” have the goodness to say, whether the right of enforcing uniformity of faith, by ecclesiastical statutes and penal consequences, rests in *each* of the above Churches *separately*, or in the *themall*, *conjointly* ? If it rest in *each*, then each has the right to demand submission from all the others ; and the most *contradictory* dogmas will have equal claims ! If it rest in all the churches *conjointly*, then they have a right to require a uniformity of faith from *others*, whilst they are a chaos of conflicting elements in *themselves* ! Well may it be said, “Lord ! what a wonderful piece of work is man !”

But, even on this point, I have not yet done with my orthodox opponent. I have shown that his pretended “*attainableness* of a uniform belief,” is directly opposed by the authority of Scripture, the reason and the experience of man, the evidence of facts and history, and the conflicting claims of rival churches. I now go farther and say, that there never has been a sepa-

rate church on earth, Catholic, Protestant, Presbyterian, or any other, whose *own* members entertained, or do entertain a uniformity of faith, or any thing nearly approaching to such uniformity. I admit, that the members may have one creed, and may make one profession : and this external, ostensible, worldly unanimity, enforced by temporal considerations, is the curse and the cancer of the whole system of human interference with the faith and the conscience of man. Error is to be lamented, infidelity is to be deplored ; but “the plague-spot” upon the Christian character and name, is the hollow, hypocritical, time-serving profession, produced by the audacious and seductive enactments of churches, on the absurd pretence of effecting an absolute *unity of opinion*, amidst an *endless diversity of minds* ! I firmly believe, that there is not a man upon earth, who could *honestly* say, that, upon *all* points of Christian doctrine and human hopes, *his* sentiments are *exactly coincident* with those of *any* other rational creature. Does not the writer in “The Orthodox Presbyterian” know, *right well*, that, in the very church which he has been mainly instrumental in degrading, under the pretext of purifying it, there still exists *every variety of opinions*, both amongst ministers and people ? When he sits upon the same bench with his “heart-probing” compeers, to measure *all* the unfortunate students by *one standard*, does he not *know*, that the doctrinal sentiments of his brethren are as diversified as their height or their features ? Aye, and still more—Does he not know, that the students *come in and go out*, a motley group of opposing Arminians and Calvinists, (possibly in certain cases mingled with Arians,) although they are all “to be palmed upon the world” as of “*one mind*,” and bound, under the heavy penalty of deprivation, and dismissal from the church, to preach *the same Doctrines*, during the whole of their lives ! And yet, the very man who knows all this, who “has cast all these stumbling blocks in the way of his brethren,” dares to talk of “uniformity of belief as being commanded by the Holy Spirit, and prayed for by the Apostle Paul !” Verily, “the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.”

I should like to learn from “The Orthodox Presbyterian,” whether the Minister of May-street Church, (for in these soothing times we are rapidly losing our

antiquated *Meeting-Houses*,) be exactly of *one mind*, with the unfortunate man who was lately exhibiting in his pulpit. I can very truly state, that there are not a few of the Orthodox themselves, anxious to obtain information upon this point. Surely, the great purifier of the Presbyterian Church, the leading "heart-prober" of Ulster, the authorized "trier of the spirits," would not admit into the sanctuary of *his* "*Church*," and to the distinguished honour of teaching *his* people, a man of whose religious tenets he did not *entirely* approve. The pulpit of that *Church* is vigilantly guarded against all *heretical* intruders, by rules and laws of the most extraordinary nature, which stand frowning around it as the grim sentinels of Orthodoxy. Not only is the stated minister, *for-ever*, to be a man of immaculate faith; but the voice of error is not, even casually, to be heard within the sacred walls. So stern and disinterested is the Orthodoxy of its founders, that even their *own* descendants are to be deprived of all control over their own property, should they dare to dissent from "the wisdom of their ancestors," or to "fall into heretical pravity." It must, therefore, be taken for granted, that *Dr. Cooke* and his Congregation are "of one mind," with the *Rev. Edward Irving*—a man, who is, at this moment, lying under the ban of the Orthodox Church of Scotland, as an Arch-heretic, and who would not be permitted to enter one of her pulpits! How many Churches have rung with the vociferations of Orthodox zeal, condemning "the Socinian *blasphemy* of Priestly," who ventured to allege that the Lord Jesus Christ "was peccable, or liable to sin;" and, how many congregations have recoiled in horror, from the bare recital of such an appalling doctrine! The *May-street Church*, however, which is too holy an edifice to admit of *any* species of heresy, has heard the doctrine of "the sinfulness of Christ's human nature," vindicated in open day, and sanctioned by the leaders of the faithful! Abused and misrepresented Socinianism may now hide its diminished head: the very champions of Orthodoxy *really maintain* one of the most revolting errors with which it has ever been *charged*. In certain of the remarkable Divine's other doctrines, however, he was even more original and striking. It would require a volume to detail the farrago of inconsistent, nonsensical, dogmatical trash, which he poured

forth in five Discourses of prodigious length : but, I shall state a few points, as a specimen of modern Orthodoxy, for the benefit of the Presbyterians of Ulster.

1. He represented the Father and the Son as *totally distinct* and *separate*. The Son came into this world, finished the task *committed* to him, and returned to Heaven, where the Father *resigned* to him *The Throne* ; “ just as an earthly king could appoint his Son, or a Lord Lieutenant, to govern in his room ! ” The Father then came down to earth, to *complete* the work commenced by the Son ; but it was not stated, whether he again resumed, or ever will resume *The Throne* ! I shall not call this *blasphemy* ; but, I do seriously ask the Orthodox Presbyterians of Ireland, are they “ of one mind ” on this subject with the Rev. Edward Irving, and his advocates in Belfast ?

2. In speaking on his darling theme, the Millenium, or the personal reign of Christ upon earth for one thousand years, he showed that he had read the Koran of Mahomet, and drawn his illustrations from the paradise of the prophet of Mecca. Decency forbids me to repeat the language which he used ; but, it must be in the recollection of hundreds, that he spoke of the approaching kingdom of the Messiah, as one in which *sensual pleasures* would be enjoyed without the ordinary natural and painful consequences !

3. He declared it to be “ a first principle of Christian Theology, that man is the *highest* order of created beings ! ” Thus, at one stroke, he annihilates all “ the thrones and dominions, the principalities and powers, the angels and archangels, the cherubim and seraphim, and the entire host of ministering spirits,” of whom we read in the Volume of Inspiration ! At other times, indeed, he represented man as *lower* than the brutes, and more wicked than the Devil ; so consistent is modern Orthodoxy !

4. He gave to Satan, “ the principedom of this world,” represented him as waging a successful warfare against Jehovah, and as “ writing the cleverest and *best* books in the world, next to the Bible ! ” Some persons were puzzled, at first, to know *what* books Satan had written ; but, they should not be suffered to remain in ignorance. Satan’s books are *Arian* and *Socinian Publications* ! This was intended as a dreadful blow against those who

believe, with the Apostle, that "there is but ONE God, and one Mediator between God and man." Yet, I question whether any greater compliment could have been paid to the Unitarians, than that which he unwittingly uttered. They never arrogated to themselves "having written the cleverest and best books in the world, next to the Bible;" but, the reluctant testimony of a bitter opponent, shows that their works have gone forth with energy and effect. Indeed, Mr. Irving frequently and candidly admitted, what many of his *caste* are fain to conceal, and ready to deny, namely—that the simple, edifying, rational, Scriptural doctrines of Unitarianism are rapidly destroying the gloomy errors of Calvinism.

5. As it has been said of Milton, that "he made Satan the hero of *Paradise Lost*," so might it be said of Mr. Irving, that he made the same Potentate the grand theme of his Discourses. The solemnity and familiarity, not to say satisfaction, with which he dwelt upon tears, and groans, and anguish, and flames, and tortures, and "the level lake that burneth," were quite appalling. We know, from Holy Writ, that a fiery prison will be the doom of "that old Serpent, the Devil;" but I do hope, out of compassion to the ninety nine hundredths of the human race, that the following statement is at least somewhat exaggerated. Speaking of the final wrath of the Saviour against various classes of offenders, and especially against "religious liberals," he emphatically announced, that "Christ would cast into the lake that burneth, all men who do not worship him:" and immediately afterwards, he gave a negative description of the situation of his favourite lake, in these memorable words: "They," (*i. e.* all Unitarians) "*shall be cast forth from the Creation of God, into the lake that burneth!*" How they shall be thrown *beyond* the verge of the creation of God, or *who* created the lake that burneth, he did not condescend to explain; but, certainly, in the delivery of this impious and inhuman trash, he showed himself to be an excellent tragic actor: "he suited the action to the word," and the word to the sentiment. His tall, uncouth, angular figure, swelled beyond its ordinary dimensions; his face assumed a withering, sinistrous, horrific scowl; he rose upon tip-toe and stretched his arms to the utmost extent above his head, as if holding the ill-fated Unitarians in his vengeful grasp; he then, suddenly

threw his head, arms, and shoulders over the side of the pulpit with great vehemence, as if plunging his victims into the burning ocean of endless perdition! A thrill of horror, doubtless, pervaded the audience, as a Minister of the *Gospel of Peace*, concluded this awful part of his performance. And, is this really to be the final, *endless* doom of *every* man, who believes on the sure record of Scripture, that "there is but ONE GOD," and who worships that God ALONE, as he is expressly commanded to do, "in the name of the Saviour?" Will the BENEVOLENT JESUS, "the good shepherd who gave his LIFE for his sheep," verily and indeed deal thus with *every* man who prefers his own *Divine Doctrines* to the contradictory and unhallowed Dogmas of Edward Irving and those who are "of one mind" with him upon such astounding subjects? The preacher dared to say, in a Christian pulpit, that "all men who do not *worship* Christ, shall be cast into the lake that burneth,"—or, in plain words, they shall go down to endless perdition, if they do not *disobey* the positive, unequivocal commandment of their Redeemer! Hear the words of the Lord Jesus upon this very subject, given as a direction to his disciples with regard to worship, *after* he should have "ascended unto *his* Father and *their* Father, *his* God and *their* God." "In that day *ye shall ask ME nothing*; but whatsoever ye ask of the FATHER, *in my name*, He will give it unto you!" Hear his divine injunction again, in the holy vision of the *Apocalypse*, (Rev. xxii. 8. 9.)

"And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel, which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, *See thou do it not*: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: *worship God*."

Now, I ask, could words be more explicit, or commands more positive, than those contained in the above passages of Scripture. And yet, according to Edward Irving and his party, *all* who reject their "human inventions," and obey the voice of the Son of God, "shall be cast into the level lake that burneth!" But, even if the commands of Christ were less plain and peremptory, if, on this subject, Unitarians *did* err in opinion, from weakness of judgment, the influence of uncontrollable circumstances, or a want of converting

grace, is it not inhuman, to exult over the prospect of their *eternal ruin*, for an *unavoidable* error of faith? "ALL shall be cast into the lake that burneth." What! Not even ONE solitary, erring mortal to be saved, through all the sufferings of the Divine Saviour, and all "the tender mercies of the God of Love!!!" "Murderers of fathers, murderers of mothers," and all the infamous workers of iniquity are *sure* of salvation, if they hold the *true faith*; but, wretched Unitarians, though their *lives* were "as pure as the unsunned snow," "shall all be cast forth from the creation of God, into the boiling lake!" And this is Orthodoxy! These are the doctrines dealt out to many of the kind-hearted people of Belfast, who, under the blighting influence of sectarian and party feelings, submit to the expression of sentiments which must shock their nature, and distress their minds. Blessed be the Father of Mercies, *man* is not to be the judge of his brother. Edward Irving, and those kindred spirits who are "of one mind" with him, may rave and rant in pulpits, calumniate in private, denounce from the press, and enjoy, by anticipation, "the smoke of everlasting burnings;" but the dominions of Satan will not thereby be enriched by a single subject,—unless, perchance, themselves, or those deluded followers who have imbibed their unhallowed spirit. And, even for *them*, we *wish* not, we *expect* not, so melancholy a fate. Blessed be the merciful Friend of *all*, the creed of the calumniated Unitarian gives more cheering views of the character of God and the destiny of man. We, vain and restless mortals, who are so often and so badly employed in teasing one another, and embittering the spirit of society by our unprofitable contentions, will soon lay down our frail bodies and human passions, in that abode "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." Our ashes shall mingle in peace, and, on the glorious morning of the Resurrection, our souls shall be united with "spiritual bodies," free from the dross of earthly passions. At that solemn hour, the rigid Calvinist, standing by the side of his pardoned Unitarian brother, may rejoice that his exclusive creed was founded upon error; and the Unitarian may bless God, that his cheering views of the Divine character were not "the mere visions of unauthorized hope." Both, redeemed by the *same Saviour*, and re-

joining in the unmerited goodness of the *same God*, may, forever, praise that unbounded mercy, through which they have been rescued from one common condemnation!

6. Every thing connected with human liberty and happiness, temporal or eternal, appears to be an object of deadly hatred with the Rev. Edward Irving and his fraternity. The late illustrious Revolution in France had just burst upon the eyes of a delighted world, in all its splendour, and magnanimity, and unsullied glory, when he made his first appearance in Belfast. Like "the ill-omened bird of night, that hates the beams of Heaven," he turned from the bright prospect of the social regeneration of a great people, with all the meanness and malignity of a *Sacheverel*, and had the audacity to degrade a Christian pulpit, and to insult a Christian audience, by delivering a feeble and frothy political tirade against human liberty, and in defence of the infamous doctrine of "Non-resistance and Passive Obedience." Yes; he had the hardihood to declare, "that *Kings* are appointed by *God*, and that the *people* are bound to *obey*,"—it matters not how cruelly, how illegally, how unjustly their tyrants govern! He denounced the French Revolution as impious and ill-fated, because the *People* had elected the *King*, and did not employ the usual cant phrase in relation to his *Kingship*—"By the grace of *God*." He declared, that "France had been formerly governed by the *Devil*; but that it was now in a worse condition, being in the hands of *Antichrist* and *Infidelity*." He then stigmatized *all* Revolutions, and all efforts of the people to regain and establish their own liberties; averring, "that they ought to obey the powers that *be*, and wait, in patience, for the Millenium!" Such absurd ravings would be too contemptible for notice, if they did not illustrate the spirit of his party, and the tendency of his system. I have uniformly observed, that the doctrine of *exclusive salvation* inflated the hearts of those who believe it, with an overweening vanity, and rendered them callous to all the kindlier sympathies of human nature. It was amazing, and, had he been standing in any other place than a pulpit, it would have been truly ludicrous, to witness the air of self-complacency and dogmatism, with which the poor inflated worm pronounced the most ridiculous self-contradictions; and the apparent satisfaction, that would not have disho-

noured the Infernal Potentate, with which he doomed all who differed from him in opinion, to everlasting perdition. Oh! there is nothing that hardens the heart and petrifies the feelings like religious bigotry. It turns back the genial current of human nature, causes men to love what they ought to abhor, and to rejoice in what they ought to deplore. Under its unholy influence, *a Dissenter himself*, Edward Irving, opposed the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, which had so long held Dissenters in degrading and injurious bondage; under its blighting power, *the Saints* of Ireland, without, I believe, a single exception, opposed the disenthralment of their Catholic countrymen; and, under its unhappy agency, the Presbyterians of Ulster have been miserably distracted, and ruin brought to the door of many of their purest and mildest instructors. The power of bigotry, in relation to the eternal destiny of man, I dread not; but, I do abhor it, as the uncompromising enemy of civil liberty and social happiness. I solemnly declare, that I never knew a thorough-paced religious bigot, who was not the determined foe of human freedom; and the Rev. Edward Irving only illustrates the universal feeling of his *caste*. As the friend, therefore, of rational liberty, and the natural rights of man, so long as God gives me power, I shall wage interminable war against bigotry and intolerance: and, I implore the lukewarm and ultra-liberal friends of religious truth to consider, that, irrespectively of all higher consequences, the dearest temporal interests of man, all that make life worth desiring, are connected with the steady and zealous maintenance of their principles. Regenerated France owes her recovered freedom, not so much to the late dethronement of a bigoted king, as to the antecedent depression of an intolerant Priesthood; and we may rest assured, that civil and social liberty will rapidly decline in our British Isles, if ever those Clergy, who advocate the doctrine of exclusive salvation, shall obtain a general ascendancy over the minds of the people.

I have only adverted to a very small number of the principles and opinions advanced by the Rev. Edward Irving, during his late visit to Belfast; for, his absurdities, (to use a gentle term,) were almost endless: but, I now repeat my question,—Is the Rev. Dr. Cooke “ of

one mind" with Mr. Irving, on *any* or *all* of the points above stated? The Doctor publicly declared, "that nothing but the blood of Christ could heal the wounds of his conscience, for having once associated with Arians;" and it is well known, that he has rent in twain the Synod of Ulster, rather than meet his Arian brethren, even in the common Church Courts. Now, bad though Arians may be, they at least believe, that "JESUS was the HOLY one and the JUST:" yet, the *Doctor* cast *them* out as something loathsome, and has taken into the sanctuary of his pulpit and his heart, a man who has declared, that "the human nature of the Divine Saviour was bristling all over with SINS, like quills upon the fretful porcupine;" a man who has ventured to assert, that Heaven's Eternal King RESIGNED the Throne of the Universe; a man who, without one throb of pity or remorse, has condemned, (as far as *he* could,) the great mass of his fellow-mortals to endless burnings; a man, whose pulpit performances have, in multitudes of instances, equally outraged common decency and common sense! If the Doctor be consistent, he is, *on all points*, "like-minded" with Edward Irving; and we have now the advantage of beholding modern Orthodoxy in its high places *unmasked*, and in its *genuine colours*! But if, as some of his apologists allege, the *Doctor* does not participate in the astounding opinions of his Reverend Brother, he is placed upon the sharper horn of a dilemma. In this case, all his ranting, and legislating, and persecuting about a "uniformity of faith," has been mere "moooushine or malignity:" or, what is still worse, admitting the *Doctor* to have been *sincere* in his bitter hostility to Synodical heresy, he has committed his pulpit, and the instruction of his people, to a *denounced and notorious heretic*, in the very face of his own avowed principles.—in order to collect, by the exhibition, a few paltry *Pounds, Shillings, and Pence*!

"It is the imposthume of the times," that such dramas can be performed without exciting universal disgust and indignation. Were the public mind in a sound condition—had not the fever and delirium of a miscalled *evangelicism* perverted both the judgment and the heart,—we should not be condemned to witness a Christian Minister converted into an *Actor*, the pulpit transformed into a stage for alternate exhibitions of tragedy and farce, and

the people who ought to enter the House of God to meditate upon the great concerns of an eternal world, congregated upon the same principle, that would bring them together to gaze at the tricks of the mountebank or the buffoon. How applicable are the words of the pious, excellent, *orthodox* Cowper :—

——“ Would I describe a Preacher,
Such as Paul would hear, approve, and own,
I would express him, *simple, grave, sincere* :
In doctrine uncorrupt ; in language plain ;
And *plain in manner* ; decent, solemn, chaste,
And *natural in gesture* : affectionate in *look*,
And tender in *address*, as well becomes
A messenger of *grace* to guilty men !
Behold the picture ! Is it like ?——
In man or woman, but far most in man,
And most of all, in man that *ministers*
And serves the altar---in my soul, I loathe
All *affectation* : 'tis my perfect scorn ;
Object of my implacable disgust !
What ! will a man *play tricks* in presence of his God ;
Or will he seek to dazzle me with tropes
And play his brilliant parts before my eyes
When I am hungry for the bread of life !
He mocks his Maker, prostitutes and shames
His noble office ; and instead of Truth,
Displaying his own graces, starves his flock.
I seek divine *simplicity* in him,
Who handles things divine. Therefore, avaunt !
All attitude, and stare, and start *theatric*,
Practised at the glass. To me, 'tis odious !

Would to God, that the preceding beautiful lines were *felt*, as they ought to be, both by Preachers and People. Then we should not be condemned to witness the vain, empty, frothy, clap-trap exhibitions, which so frequently disgrace our age : then we should not behold the very sanctity and solemnity of *Prayer* contaminated by theatrical grimaces and gesticulations, as if the all-perfect Spirit were to be influenced by “bodily exercise which profiteth nothing :” then we should no longer have the brain-born visions of the fanatic or the knave, substituted for the sublime principles of rational piety, and the sober, earnest and affectionate inculcation of the great social and moral duties of life, as connected with the highest interests both of time and of eternity. I confidently appeal to *all* who, with various feelings and motives, lately attended Mr. Irving's Discourses in Belfast, whether any

one individual returned home with an increase of substantial wisdom, with deeper love to God and man, or with more enlarged views and a more profound sense of duty ! Christian husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, friends and neighbours, masters and servants, inhabitants of earth and candidates for heaven, was any *one* of you rendered BETTER, by the Rev. Edward Irving's fifteen hours' vapid declamation !

The truth is, the whole matter was a *failure*: the disappointment was *universal*. The man reads well, has a noble voice, understands elocution, and delivered several passages, theatrically speaking, with suitable gesture and intonation. But as a Divine, a Biblical critic, and an expounder of Holy Writ, his efforts were incomparably puerile and defective. His illustrations of his favourite book, the Apocalypse, were even more distinguished for wildness, incoherence, and absurdity, than those of any of his precursors ; and throughout his entire five Discourses, he proved himself, what his Publications had already amply testified, *totally* unable to follow out any regular train of argument. He seems to possess abundance of *fancy*, but "a plentiful lack of *judgment*:" his *tact* is good, but his *taste* is pitiable. His style is eminently irregular : in some passages, effective ; frequently turgid, sometimes conversational, occasionally vulgar, and generally inaccurate. The verdict of Belfast was *unanimous* ; for, in the opinion of the friends and enemies of his theological system, he equally failed. His visit *was* to have accomplished the total extinction of Unitarian heresy in this country : it *has* accomplished nothing which the Calvinists desired. It miserably failed even on the *main point*,—the replenishing of exhausted coffers !

Two *unexpected* advantages, however, have accrued from his visit. Calvinism, by the dexterity or timidity of its advocates, has hitherto, in this country, been generally clothed in the imposing mask and mantle of mystery. Mr. Irving, with a rude but honest hand, tore off the mask, and stripped the idol of popular adoration naked before the world : let those *now* bow and worship who can ! The next great service which his visit rendered to the cause of truth, consisted in the irresistible evidence which it has afforded, of the *sincerity* with which

our Synodical leaders have advocated *the necessity and attainableness* of a UNIFORMITY OF FAITH!" It is a portion of the cant, both of modern *orthodoxy* and *liberalism*, to say, "that the *characters* of men have nothing to do with their principles, and that *errors* should be exposed without reference to the *conduct* of those that hold them." This may be sound reasoning, and is certainly an excellent cloak for the religious persecutor; but it accords not with the sentiments of *Him*, who denounced "Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," and who declared, that "the *tree* is known by its *fruits*!"

A REMONSTRANT.

Intelligence.

CONJOINED MEETING OF THE GENERAL AND REMONSTRANT SYNODS OF ULSTER.

These two Reverend Bodies held a Joint Meeting, at Cookstown, upon the 1st Sept., in order to attempt a settlement of certain points, chiefly relating to pecuniary affairs, which had not been satisfactorily arranged at the period of their ecclesiastical separation. That our readers may be enabled fully to comprehend the proceedings of the late *extraordinary meeting*, and properly to estimate the motives and characters of the two contending parties, we shall give a brief detail of certain past transactions.

It is well known, that the distractions of the General Synod of Ulster, which have given so much pain to all the true friends of religion, commenced at Strabane, in the year 1827, when certain restless individuals of that Body succeeded, in direct violation of the standing laws of their church, in passing an enactment, by which all the Ministers were called upon to join in one common Declaration of Faith, expressed in human language, concerning the abstruse and mysterious Doctrine of the Trinity. Against this measure, as being both unlawful in itself, and totally subversive of Christian liberty, several Ministers and Elders protested; refusing submission to such an arbitrary enactment, and declaring their intention to move for its repeal at the next annual meet-

ing. The matter was accordingly brought forward at Cookstown, in the year 1828; but, instead of the former obnoxious decree being withdrawn, *eight new Overtures* were irregularly introduced by the dominant party, and carried under the influence of popular clamour and intimidation; but we are bound to state, that they were opposed by about *sixty* of the most respectable Ministers and Elders who attended the meeting. A powerful protest was entered at the time; and, on the 16th October, 1828, a Presbyterian Meeting was held in Belfast, in order to devise means for effecting a repeal of those offensive regulations. That meeting was most numerously attended; and embraced a very large portion of the wealth, intelligence, and moral respectability of Presbyterian Ulster. A powerful Remonstrance, both against the Strabane Declaration, and the Cookstown Overtures, was drawn up, in order to be laid before the Synod, at Lurgan, in 1829. That no person might plead ignorance of the intentions of the Remonstrants, this Document was printed, and largely circulated during the winter; and, a few weeks before the Lurgan Synod, it was published in six of the principal newspapers of the Province. In consequence of these proceedings, the meeting at Lurgan was expected with intense anxiety; and the largest assemblage of Ministers and Elders ever known was the result of the general excitement.

At this meeting, however, both the Remonstrants and the public experienced a most unexpected disappointment. The respectable town of Lurgan, the crowds of enlightened Protestants that attended to hear the discussion, and the formidable array of liberal Calvinistic Ministers and Elders, who deeply sympathized with the Remonstrants, did not seem favourable to the views of the intolerants; and, by a dexterous manœuvre, they succeeded in postponing the discussion of the Overtures and Remonstrance for six weeks—and *appointed a Special Synod for that purpose, to be held in Cookstown*. It was publicly proved in Lurgan, that this disgraceful trick had been previously planned; doubtless, in order to harass the Remonstrants and their friends, by bringing on the discussion at an unfavourable time, in an unfriendly district of country, and under unfavourable circumstances. The Remonstrants, therefore, determined

no longer to continue an unequal conflict with men who, secure in their *numbers*, trampled equally upon their own laws, and the principles of fair-dealing. They, consequently, declined attending the adjourned meeting at Cookstown, but transmitted their Remonstrance, and likewise an Appeal to the justice of their brethren. In this latter, they declared, "that unless the Overtures were *totally repealed*, they could no longer remain in connexion with the Synod;" and requested, in the event of a repeal being refused, "that a Committee of Synod might be appointed to meet them in Belfast, in order to arrange the terms of an amicable separation."

The Overtures were continued, but a Committee was appointed; and the Delegates of the two contending parties met in Belfast, on the 9th of September, 1829. The leading members of the Synod having repeatedly urged the Remonstrants "to leave them in peace," under the assurance, that "they desired not to do them any injury," and, especially, that "they wished for none of their loaves and fishes," it was considered, that the terms of an amicable separation could be very easily arranged. In this, however, the Remonstrants were miserably disappointed. When they wished to retire, as they had been so frequently requested to do by their opponents, they found those very opponents, instead of opening wide their doors, raising up every possible obstacle in their way. Whilst the Synodical party assumed to themselves the right of admitting the Ministers of all new Congregations which might join the Synod, to the benefits of the Widows' Fund, *which is common property*, "they did not feel themselves *competent*" to deal out a like measure of justice to those who might join the Remonstrants. The arrangements of the *Royal Bounty*, however, afforded them a still more favourable opportunity of exercising their unworthy hostility. By the original terms of the royal grant, in 1803, the signature of the Moderator of the General Synod is required to every Memorial in order to authenticate the ordination of a Minister, and secure to him the bounty. The Remonstrants, therefore, justly put forward the following demand:—

"We require our brethren of the Synod to declare, that, on our ordaining a Minister in any Congregation now in existence, or which may be hereafter erected, their Moderator shall, in all such cases, annex his signature, in the usual manner, to the Memorial for the

Royal Bounty forwarded to him by such Minister : and shall, on no account whatever, withhold his signature, when regularly certified, of such ordination."

To this just and reasonable request, the Synod's Committee made the following shuffling and evasive reply—evidently keeping a door open to injure the Remonstrants with Government, on any favourable opportunity :—

"That our Moderator shall be directed to sign the Memorials of the successors of the Remonstrants in the same manner in which those of members of the Presbytery of Antrim are at present signed by him—the Synod reserving to itself the right of making such representations to Government as the circumstances of any case may require."

With this reply, the Remonstrants were, of *course*, justly dissatisfied : but, they were unwilling to suspect any dishonest or dishonourable intentions on the part of their brethren ; and consequently, they proceeded to make arrangements with their Congregations, for a final separation from the Synod. But, what was their astonishment, *three weeks afterwards*, when they received a communication from the Moderator of the Synod, stating, "that the Committee had exceeded their authority on the point regarding the Royal Bounty," and postponing the final decision until the regular meeting of Synod, *nine months afterwards*, at Omagh ! This Committee, however, which was "incompetent to decide" on a mere question of moral honesty, was perfectly "competent," in the very same letter, to enjoin the Remonstrants "to give in their final determination regarding a separation, on or before the 15th of October," (i. e. in less than *two weeks*,) under a *threat*, that if they did not, "all the previous stipulations of September 9th, would be recalled, and declared null and void." Thus, it appears, that they had no "competent power" to act justly ; but, that they had uncontrolled authority to threaten, to annoy, and to harass their honest and unoffending brethren ! Their final answer could not be given for *nine months* ; but, the *Remonstrants*, whose conduct might have been materially affected by that answer, and who had received no guarantee for themselves or their people, were peremptorily required to decide in *less than two weeks*—though scattered over the Province, and having comparatively no time to consult with each other, or with

their Congregations ! The history of crooked policy, and clerical insolence, affords no parallel to this Synodical Jesuitism !

The Remonstrants, however, like honest men, regardless of consequences, and "determined to keep their consciences untainted," *did* separate from the Synod : and we need not tell the afflicted and degraded Presbyterians of Ulster, how many, very many, of those upright Ministers have been persecuted for maintaining their integrity, during the last twelve months. Six of their Congregations have been more or less distracted ; in some cases, by the base intrigues of men *called* Ministers of the Gospel, who, in order to create animosity, pandered to the ruthless passions of a discomfited political faction ; in other cases, by the foulest misrepresentations of their religious opinions, and the open or secret threatening of Landlords. But we leave these matters in order to proceed with our details.

The Remonstrants having united themselves in a Synod, in May last, appointed the Rev. Messrs. Porter, Mitchel, and Davis, to attend the Meeting of the General Synod at Omagh, in the month of June, in order to make a final arrangement respecting the Royal Bounty and the Widows' Fund. The Synod met on *Tuesday*, and the Remonstrants' Deputation remained in attendance until *Saturday*, in hourly expectation of having those points permanently settled, which the Committee of 1829 were "incompetent to decide ;" but, after all their irksome attendance, they were informed that a new Committee, "with full powers, was appointed to meet the Remonstrants in Belfast, on the 20th of July, to issue all matters in dispute !" They might have been told of this arrangement, early in the week ; but, such a gentlemanlike course of procedure would not have comported with the uniform and studied system of delay and insult which had been undeviatingly pursued ! The party that had violated no compact and inflicted no injury, were to be teased and tortured at the caprice of those who had done *both* ; and to bend, in lowly supplication, for their indefeasible rights !

At length, however, the important 20th of July did arrive ; and a numerous Committee of Remonstrants assembled, at great inconvenience, to meet their brethren appointed by the General Synod. They looked upon

that day as the goal of their labours, and the end of their harassing conferences ; but, lo ! only *four* Ministers of the General Synod attended, and these “considered themselves too small a number to settle such important concerns !” This conference, therefore, in the usual mode, *ended in vapour* : and it was mutually agreed, that the *two Synods* should meet in Cookstown, on the 1st of September, to make a final arrangement of all matters still in dispute. The only *new* matter introduced at this meeting was certain propositions, on the part of the General Synod’s Committee, respecting six Remonstrant Congregations, to which a reply was promised to be made at Cookstown. These propositions and the Remonstrants’ answer will be found in their regular order.

Behold, then, the 1st of September arrived, and the two Synods assembled in Cookstown, amidst torrents of rain ; as if the very elements had conspired to cast a congenial gloom over their proceedings. The minor men of the two parties occasionally interchanged a friendly greeting ; but the leaders only scowled upon each other, in hatred or disdain. Oh ! what a meeting for Ministers of the Gospel ; and what have those to answer for, who have excited such deadly animosity ! The General Synod mustered between *thirty* and *forty* Ministers ; and the Remonstrant Synod, *eleven*. At present, we have no time to enter into the details of the proceedings ; nor to notice the various speechings, and sarcasms, and ingenious misquotations of Scripture which distinguished the principal actors. The first day was occupied in discussions respecting the Widows’ Fund ; when it was finally agreed “to appoint a Committee to inquire into the expediency and practicability of dividing the Capital amongst the contributors respectively belonging to the two Synods and the Presbytery of Antrim.” The two Synods held separate meetings in the evening, to prepare replies to the propositions mutually submitted for their consideration. On Thursday morning, at *ten* o’clock, “they met for the despatch of business ;” the General Synod having been engaged from *six*, in framing a response to the Remonstrants’ demand respecting the Royal Bounty. We shall here repeat their demand, which was in the same words, originally used in September, 1829.

“We require our brethren of the Synod to declare, that, on our ordaining a Minister in any Congregation now in existence, or which may be hereafter erected, their Moderator shall, in all such cases, annex his signature, in the usual manner, to the Memorial for the Royal Bounty forwarded to him by such Minister : and shall, on no account whatever, withhold his signature, when regularly certified of such ordination.”

To this very simple, and, as we should think, *reasonable* request, the General Synod returned the following reply, which is not very long, considering that it cost nearly *six hours warm labour* !

“Resolved—That, as the decision of the case submitted to the Synod in this proposal, involves a variety of conflicting interests, which the Government of the country are alone competent finally to adjust, the Synod have resolved to lay before Government a full representation of the whole matter connected with the late separation ; and do, therefore, feel incompetent to give a specific answer to Remonstrants’ request, till the determination of the Government may be ascertained.”

Now, this is very pretty diplomatic language ; which, being translated into plain English, means neither less nor more than this—That the reverend and evangelical gentlemen of the General Synod, having broken faith with their brethren, and passed oppressive and unchristian laws, by which the Remonstrant Ministers and Congregations have been *compelled*, as honest men, to separate from them, the worthy Orthodox Divines of the Synod will do all in *their power* to enlist the *Government* on the side of persecution, to shift the odium of the iniquitous act from their own shoulders to those of his Majesty’s Ministers, and to *rob* the respectable laity belonging to the Remonstrant body, of their just rights ! So, so, gentlemen ! The mask has at length fallen off ! Well, though we knew you, and degraded though you are, we confess that you have plunged into a depth of ignominy even beyond *our* expectation. And, have all your canting professions about “wishing to do no injury to your brethren, to touch none of their loaves and fishes,” ended in this ! You must *consult the Government*, ere you perform an act of common justice : then, if they aid your designs, the work of spoliation will be *theirs*, and not *yours* : and, if they turn from you with merited disgust and indignation, you will pretend to be quite pleased that they have not assisted you in a gross act of public robbery ! How dare you, after such a foul purpose, glossed over by a tissue of deceitful words, look honest men in the face !

We only hope, that you will *persevere* in going to the Government, with your proposition. The act may render an essential service to the public, by inducing the Government to withdraw from *the whole batch of you*, emoluments which you so badly deserve. It cannot be, that the country shall be compelled to pay you for exciting interminable contention, and persecuting honest men because they will not sacrifice their consciences at the shrine of your madness or ambition! The Remonstrants merit additional gratitude from their country, for still farther uncloaking you by the following question:

“Quite dissatisfied with the reply just made to our former proposition, we, the Remonstrants, do now propose to our brethren of the Synod of Ulster, in conformity with the suggestion of some of their own Members, on a former occasion, to join with us in an application to the Government of the country, to receive the signature of our Moderator, in the same manner as those of the Moderators of the Synods of Ulster and Munster.”

In their former reply, the General Synod refused to ratify the agreement made by their *own Committee* in September last: in that which follows, they basely shrink from the proposals made by their *own leaders*.

“1. Resolved—That, lest Remonstrants should misapprehend the meaning of the Synod, in the reply just given to their former application, we feel it necessary to state, that in the contemplated narrative and reference to be laid before Government, the Synod distinctly disavow any intention of interfering with the Royal Bounty of existing Remonstrants.

“2. Resolved—That, while the Synod decline any union with Remonstrants in an application to Government, they feel it necessary to state, that it is their intention to apply to Government, in order to be relieved from all official certification of any ordinations, except those of members of their own body; but, while the Synod will attend to their own rights, they pledge themselves, that they intend, neither directly nor indirectly, to cast any obstacle in the way of any separate application which Remonstrants may choose to make to his Majesty's Government.”

The public may not, perhaps, be aware of the full extent of the General Synod's disinterestedness and magnanimity in “not interfering with the Royal Bounty of existing Remonstrants.” Kind souls! *they* will not take the Bounty from their brethren! Good readers, “do you know the reason why?” Simply because they *cannot*. It is solemnly guaranteed by the terms of the Grant, that “the Royal Bounty cannot be withdrawn from any *individual*, so long as it is continued to the *Body at large*.” How generous, then, in the Synod, not

to “interfere” with the solemn pledge of his Majesty’s Government! But, it may be withdrawn from *the whole*; and we have heard hints that it *will*, as a wholesome lesson to all meddling and persecuting priests. The Remonstrants, notwithstanding the hopelessness of their pupils, pursued their excellent system of *catechising*.

“Does the General Synod intend, or does it not, on the demise or removal of any of the present Remonstrant Ministers, to apply to his Majesty’s Government for the portions of the Royal Bounty now enjoyed by such ministers, in order to appropriate them to the exclusive benefit of Pastors who may be chosen by persons that were formerly connected with the Congregations which have joined the Remonstrant Body, but who now adhere to the General Synod?”

Mark the General Synod’s reply:—

“That, inasmuch as the cases contemplated in this question, may not occur for a considerable period, and as there is every reason to expect that, in the meantime, the Government may adopt some general arrangement that will provide for all such cases, the Synod do not feel it necessary, at present, to express any intention on the subject submitted to them.”

How cautious and how prudent! They “do not feel it necessary to express any intention,” as none of the Remonstrant Ministers may die “for a considerable period!” But, does not their very *silence* speak their *intention*, with a trumpet’s voice! Would any man be afraid or ashamed to avow *an* intention that was honourable and honest? For once they have spoken clearly and unequivocally; and the public must now see, that spoliation has been the end and object of the proceedings of the last three years. We accuse not, however, the whole body of such purposes; there are still well-meaning men amongst them; but they are timid and pusillanimous.

The preceding questions and answers elicited a great deal of conversation. Amongst the remarks made, we especially honoured the candour of the Rev. Jas. Elder and the Rev. H. Dobbin, in stating, “that the Synod should act honestly and confess the truth—viz. that they would endeavour to seize the Bounty of Remonstrant Congregations, *if they could*.”

The propositions of the General Synod’s Committee, in July last, and the answer of the Remonstrants were then read.

“Proposal from the Synod’s Committee given to Remonstrants:

“Resolved—That although all the houses of worship, and other Congregational properties at present in dispute between portions of

Congregations adhering to the Synod, and those which have gone off with the Remonstrants, were, in the original erection and creation intended for the Synod; we might (as was done in the cases of Tobermore, Ballywalter, and Donaghadee, with the concurrence of the Remonstrants themselves,) have insisted on claiming them entirely; yet, for the sake of peace—to avoid litigation—and because the rights of individuals in Congregational property ought not to be affected by their conscientious adherence to their own religious opinions, we are willing to submit all questions affecting those properties to equitable arbitration, on the annexed principles:—

“1. That where the majority of proprietors of Congregational property, at the time of the separation, adhere to the Synod, we propose that they become exclusive possessors thereof, on condition of paying to the minority their equitable proportion of the same, and *vice versa*.

“2. That we leave the mode of ascertaining this majority, in the several divided Congregations, to be settled by mutual agreement between the Synodical and Remonstrant Committees.

“Waiving their claim as the church to the entire ecclesiastical property under their control, and acting on principles of abstract equity, the Synod's Committee, in September last, agreed to restore to Remonstrant Congregations their equitable proportion of different Synodical funds; and on the same principles, they now call on Remonstrants to do equal-handed justice, and restore to those persons who have, in the Congregations of Glenarm, Cairncastle, Ballycarry, Templepatrick, Greyabbey, and Narrow-water, adhered to the Synod, their equitable proportion of those Congregational properties at present detained exclusively by Remonstrants.

To the above propositions, the following answer was returned:—

“In reference to the preamble of the Propositions submitted to the Remonstrants by the General Synod's Committee, on the 20th July last—

“1. We can by no means admit that ‘the right to the houses of worship, and other Congregational properties in question,’ was at any time vested in the General Synod of Ulster. In their original erection and creation, they were intended, not for the General Synod, but solely for the benefit of the Presbyterian people worshipping in those houses, under their regularly ordained Ministers.

“2. We regret that the General Synod's Committee should have deemed it necessary to compare the Remonstrant Ministers with those of Ballywalter and Donaghadee—men who were degraded for the grossest immoralities, and a majority of whose people seceded with them from the Presbyterian communion. The case of Tobermore is equally inapplicable, inasmuch as Mr. Carson, though a respectable character, had, with the portion of the Congregation adhering to him, entirely renounced Presbyterianism, and become Independent.

“3. The General Synod's Committee farther allege, ‘that they might have insisted on claiming entirely the properties now in dis-

pute between them and the Remonstrants,' and insinuate, that 'for the sake of peace, and to avoid litigation,' they are disposed to waive certain of their legal rights. In reply, we beg leave to state, that we *have* not sought, nor *do* we seek, any *favour* at the hands of our Synodical brethren; we do not wish them to sacrifice any legal or equitable claim out of compliment to us. We merely ask our rights.

"4. We rejoice to find that the Synod's Committee have amply recognized the great principle always maintained by ourselves, viz. 'that the rights of individuals in Congregational property ought not to be affected by their conscientious adherence to their own religious opinions.' On this mutually admitted principle, we take our stand. We have never violated any compact, either written or implied, into which we ever entered with the General Synod of Ulster; nor have *we* ever sought to invade the property or privileges of any of our brethren. In faithful adherence to the usages and discipline of the General Synod, we invariably endeavoured to 'keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.' The General Synod having changed the laws and constitution of the church, by the enactment of new and unprecedented Overtures, which we consider oppressive, both to the Ministers and people, and to which we could not conscientiously submit, we utterly deny that they have any legal or equitable right to inflict a penalty upon *us*, merely in consequence of their own change of opinions and conduct. Without adverting at present to the right of the General Synod to pass such enactments, and not desiring to revive unpleasant and unprofitable discussions, we do sincerely trust, that our brethren, having *forced* us to retire from amongst them, in vindication of conscience, they will not attempt to place us in a worse condition in the separate Association which we have been compelled to form, than that in which we would have been placed had we continued in connexion with their Body. We have reason to expect this measure of justice, not merely as being right in itself, but in fulfilment of the *pledges* repeatedly given in the General Synod, during the discussions of late years—that 'there was no wish to injure us in our characters, our properties, or our privileges.'

"5. We consider that the General Synod, by sanctioning the acts of several individuals and Presbyteries, who fomented divisions in many of our Congregations, and endeavoured to deprive several of our Ministers of their Meeting-Houses, have violated the spirit of the declarations on which we separated from that Body, to the grievous annoyance, and serious temporal loss, of many of our brethren.

"6. Under the circumstances above detailed, we conceive, that the Remonstrant Ministers and Congregations, having faithfully adhered to all the laws and usages of the church—having changed none of their principles—having been charged with no crime—and having retired at the repeated request of their Synodical brethren, are not bound by any legal claim to comply with the demands made upon them, in the propositions of the General Synod's Committee.

"In the whole of the six Congregations referred to, we retain a preponderance, both in numbers and respectability, of those who were regular members at the time of the separation. In some, we

have nine-tenths—in others, two-thirds—and in all, a decided majority. We, therefore, entertain no dread of the most rigid scrutiny as to numbers; but we cannot sanction any claim of *right* on the part of the General Synod, by submitting to have those Congregations polled, or the property divided.

“7. Nevertheless, in proof of our anxious desire to terminate the unhappy differences which have so long distracted the Presbyterians of Ulster, and believing that many of the former members of the Congregations referred to, may have seceded on conscientious principles, we are willing to make farther pecuniary sacrifices, and earnestly recommend to those Congregations to pay all such persons as have seceded from them, in a peaceful and Christian manner, an equitable proportion of all sums contributed by themselves, or their ancestors, towards the erection and repair of their respective Meeting-houses, on condition that the like measure of kindness be extended to those who may withdraw, in a similar manner, from the General Synod, in order to join the Remonstrants—the equitable proportion, on both sides, to be determined by two or three men of business, mutually chosen, in all cases where the parties interested cannot otherwise come to a satisfactory agreement.

“8. We consider, that the General Synod have only performed their duty, in agreeing to return an equitable proportion of the various Synodical funds, inasmuch as the recent separation of the Remonstrants arose from no wish of their own, but solely from the innovating enactments of the General Synod of Ulster; and, therefore, we cannot perceive on what ground, that Reverend Body should assume a tone of condescension and generosity, for the simple performance of an act of *common honesty*.

“Cookstown, Sept. 2, 1830.”

The preceding offer of compensation on the part of the Remonstrants was not accepted by the General Synod, who did not seem to relish the conditional demand made upon themselves. After all the Remonstrant Ministers, except three, had retired, a discussion took place respecting the method of communicating with Government; but, we understand, that nothing was definitively settled on the subject.

Correspondents.

We have received a variety of interesting communications, some of which are approved of, and shall appear in our next. The remaining articles are under consideration. We are under the necessity of postponing the continuation of “*Scripture its own Interpreter*,” until our next number.

Subscribers.

The *second edition* of the first Number of the *Bible Christian* will be ready for delivery on Monday.

THE
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NO. XI.

DECEMBER, 1830.

VOL. I.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

(This is the third point of the Credenda enacted in the late Overtures of the Synod of Ulster.)

THERE are a number of words and phrases in reference to Christianity, which from long misapplication have acquired a kind of prescriptive right to mislead, to bewilder, and to blind. They come down to modern ears as the ordinances of an antiquated and ghostly authority, placed in the hands of a ministry leagued against humanity, claiming inherent prerogatives and passive obedience, and publishing to the light of heaven, that the darkest perversions of legislators are divine. The following are a few of these expressions: Election, Effectual Calling, Redemption, Adoption, Atonement, Justification, Sanctification, Grace. These words, though used in the original by the Apostles, with much propriety, have been, in after times, perverted from their natural meaning, and have been made the Shiboleth of a party—the high Isoterics of Orthodoxy. The opinions which generally obtain, with regard to these truly Scriptural themes, are, for the most part, incompatible with the spirit of Christianity, and the very nature of the thing. Thus Election is referred to a final and unchangeable state—a condition in which the human being, by a decree framed in the antecedent Eternity, becomes in time the play-thing of an irrespective Destiny, dreams away a life of Delusion, the hapless, helpless child of Necessity—accounting life tolerable withal, by foolishly imagining that he is Free!—but more of this, and of the other subjects, at some future period.

There is something peculiarly vague—something remarkably assumptive about the common acceptance of the phrase—*Justification by Faith*. I remember, when I had still some lingering thoughts after Orthodoxy, reading Calvin's Institutes on this subject for months,

and being obliged to leave it with a most oppressive sense of the desperate ingenuity of that reckless Theologian. On referring to the Westminster Confession of Faith, we find this plausible yet most delusive exhibition of the doctrine of *Justification* :

“Justification is an act of God’s free grace unto sinners, in which he pardoneth all their sins, accepteth and accounteth their persons righteous in his sight; not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but only for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ, by God imputed to them, and received by faith alone.”

The unchristian and unreasonable character of this passage will be easily discovered by considering, in the first place, that moral agency and human responsibility are totally left out of the question ; men are regarded as if they had no concern in their own salvation ; and then a sum of righteousness foreign to their character is handed over to them, and all they have to do is to receive it by *faith* ; and then, they are left totally in the dark what this *faith* may be,—whether *faith* in the Trinity,—*faith* in the Atonement, *faith* in Election—moreover, if, as the Orthodox say, “they have not this *faith* of themselves,” it is obvious that human beings stand as ciphers in the great account,—personal virtue is a matter of no consideration,—men are granted eternal life by an indiscriminate grace, by an ill-judged generosity, and through a righteousness not their own ; or they are passed over on account of a sinfulness—a crime of incapacity which it was not in their power to remedy. Thus, according to the current use of the word *imputation*, men, who have got *no righteousness*, are accounted *righteous*, by an expedient as *unjustifiable*, as the *imputation* of *crime* to a person who is not *criminal*, is *slandorous* and *unchristian* :—thus that most holy and righteous word of God, which is also the language of Nature—the voice of the Universe,—that, “every man shall give an account of himself to God,”—that “he who is righteous, is righteous,”—that “the wicked shall not escape,”—that “men shall be judged according to their works, whether they have been good or whether they have been evil,”—these immutable and imperishable laws are abused, are trampled upon ; and men, in attributing to Deity an administration consistent with their own partialities, and their own narrow ideas, have constitut-

ed a religious regime after the very worst models—they have introduced a Divine Anarchy.

Orthodox legislators seem to labour under this great mistake. This has been the perplexity of every age since Christianity has ceased to be a religion of common sense—of human understanding, viz.: the notion that the provisions of Christianity are final and irrefragable, and, what is worse, limited to a few. Preachers have taught that *Justification* is some inalienable and unalterable possession; some permanent security in which men may repose without fear of forfeiture or loss; and should there be any little delinquency, any of those slips incident to human infirmity, then come in the doctrines of Election, of irresistible Grace, and of Saintly Perseverance, and give a false and hollow safety; and men are led to imagine that by one stretch of *faith* they are once *justified*—and *justified* for ever! Whereas, the Scriptures teach that although the primary blessings conveyed by Christianity are restricted by no limitations, yet that men in the possession of these rich blessings have still “to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling,” that these blessings may be improved or may be abused, and that it is the duty of every individual, however *effectually called* to Christianity, however *justified* by his reception of it, however *sanctified* by its influence, and however securely he may seem to stand, to “take heed lest he fall.”

In order to understand fully these Scriptural expressions which have created so much confusion, and which, by misapprehension, have given the Evangelicals so much nice work in making out any thing like a plausible version of Christianity, we must refer to the circumstances in which they were originally employed, we must take in the general scope of the New Testament dispensation. The comparison of spiritual things with spiritual, is the only legitimate instrument which Christianity, as well as the soundest philosophy, warrants; and when we find, for instance, such a sentiment as this insisted upon as a Scriptural doctrine,—“a man is justified by faith,” (Rom. iii. 28)—and when upon comparison we find that “by works a man is justified,” (James ii. 24.) is equally Scriptural, we ought at least to pause before we give any decided and exclusive preference to either sentiment, and examine whether both may not be true,

and how they are reconcilable—especially we should be cautious about adopting the sentiment of *Justification by faith alone*, when it is written that Christ came into the world, “to purify to himself a peculiar people *zealous of good works*.” An impartial comparison of the language of Scripture will lead to the discovery that, though Paul and James are at variance in terms, yet that they coincide with the general spirit of Christianity. The case may, in my mind, be resolved by one or other of these explanations.

The *Justification* spoken of by Paul may be different from that mentioned by James; or, the *faith* of Paul may, by its *operation*, be equivalent to the *works* of James; *i.e.* the *Justification* of Paul may refer to an introduction to Christ’s kingdom on earth, that of James may refer to an introduction to Christ’s heavenly kingdom; or, the *faith* of Paul must be something more than mere *believing*, and must ultimately amount to the *practice* of his brother apostle. Thus the apparent discrepancy of the apostles may be reconciled: but a question arises, why the Synod of Ulster, in their legislative capacity, should give an exclusive preference to the “Justification by faith” of Paul, and recording no zeal for good works, should pass over the “Justification by Works” of James? This *reprobation* of James—is it to the praise of their sovereign wisdom!

Let us inquire what is the nature and extent of the term *justification*. The orthodox, in their affectation of learning, call it a *forensic* term. How instructive!—how consolatory! When I was studying divinity, I recollect being particularly struck with the learned barrenness of this word’s etymology. Christians require more simple, more homely explanations in divine things. The *justification* of the Scriptures must in my mind be a *religious* term. It cannot be involved in the wheels of *forensic* ambiguity. It does not depend on the nice intricacy of legal technicality. The original is the same word that is usually translated *righteousness*. It literally means *a making just*—and Christianity leads to the practice of *justice*—it teaches *righteousness*. Now the meaning of *justification* will be much simplified by regarding it in a twofold point of view—one, justification in reference to our temporal state, another in reference to eternity. The final and the nobler one is the result of

a due improvement of the antecedent. By this consideration of a twofold justification we shall be able to explain the whole difficulties about *faith* and *works*; and by keeping it in view, we shall understand those passages about *salvation*, where the sacred writers, speaking of the same subject, are apparently inconsistent with one another and with themselves; while one, in reality, at one time is treating of the temporal blessings conveyed through Christ, and another at a different time, is unfolding the securities of an eternal world. I regard the *antecedent justification* as synonymous with the introduction to the christian life;—the *final one*, as the presentation of the crown of righteousness which is laid up in the heavens. I regard the *primary justification*, as a dispensation of God's kindness to the human race, through Christ, connected intimately with repentance, and the formation of moral character. In this dispensation God declares that he is pleased to receive the truly penitent, and to forgive his past offences, upon the consideration of his earnest endeavours after future amendment of life;—thus, as it were, giving the Christian every fair advantage at the commencement of his career, that he may start without embarrassment for the prize of eternal life. The word *justification* in this sense was peculiarly applicable to the early Christian converts. Before they became acquainted with Christianity, they were labouring under the disqualifications to which their disobedience to the law of Moses, or the law of Nature, subjected them. They were described as “enemies to God”—“aliens”—“dead in trespasses and sins”:—But when by faith in Christ, *i. e.* by their reception of Christianity, they become reconciled to God, they were no longer classed among the “ungodly”—“the unholy”—“the wicked who knew not God;”—they were “washed”—they were “sanctified”—they were “*justified*”—they became “the faithful in Christ Jesus;” and during their continuance in this faith, they were accounted “saints,”—“holy,”—“saved” &c.;—not that there was any actual possession or forestalment of heaven,—not that any amnesty for the future was recorded,—not that their being *saved* from the errors of heathenism, or the yoke of Judaism, was any absolute indication of their eternal state:—This *primary saving*—this *antecedent justification* might be abused, and for-

feited and lost : whereas he that is *finally justified* has an inheritance in the heavens that fadeth not away.—It is simply so :—Christianity presents a system of *antecedent* favours, which are *temporal*, and extended to every one who bears the *name* of Christian—of *consequent* blessings which are *eternal*, to be extended to those alone who are Christians in *deed* and in *truth*. It is ours to distinguish between these two very different parts of the same beneficent plan.

The grand theological mistake, then, to which we have alluded, ought to appear conspicuous from this consideration of a *twofold justification* ; and Divines who have imagined that because men are *justified by faith alone* on their introduction to the Christian life, are also to be *justified by faith alone* on their entrance to eternal life,—such Divines ought to be alarmed that they entertain notions destructive of moral character, and contrary to the whole spirit of the Gospel. Let me be understood—I submit it humbly ; it is only to the blessings of Christianity in this world we are admitted *by faith alone, without works* ; but for admittance into another world, both *faith* and *works* are necessary—are indispensable.

This seems to me to be the state of the case. Mankind, by their transgression of the original law of God, which required perfect obedience, became guilty before their Maker. The Mosaic dispensation, with its ceremonies and sacrifices, did not by any intrinsic excellence avail to relieve men of their sins ; and though it recorded the importance of virtue, the imperative necessity of obedience, yet, by the very obligations which it imposed, it involved the Jews in endless offences. The Mosaic Law ran thus :—“ Do this and live ;” but few could do this—few could perform its requirements—few could be *justified* by their conduct. Under the Christian dispensation, God, in pursuance of a progressive plan which he contemplated, and which he conducted by different Agents, for the melioration of his human offspring, has, in the fulness of time, declared by his Son, that “ whosoever believeth in him,” *i. e.* whosoever listens to his instruction and offers his sincere endeavours after obedience humbly before the throne of God, shall, in the clemency of this dispensation, have his sincere endeavours accepted instead of sinless obedience ; he

shall be placed in a state of new and exalting privileges ; he shall be saved from the overpowering influence of evil passions ; he shall be regenerated—redeemed ; he shall be emancipated from the slavery of a burdensome and unsatisfactory ceremonial ; he shall be raised from that prostration of intellect which religious thralldom in any shape invariably superinduces ; he shall be no longer under the mastery of sin ; he shall become a purified, a moral character ; he shall become *just*, humanly speaking ; “ he shall be *justified* from all things from which he could not be *justified* by any other Law ; ” he shall thus be placed in a state of acceptance with God through faith in Jesus Christ, and though not absolutely and irrevocably fixed in his eternal mansion, and though not quite removed beyond the reach of temptation and terrestrial impulses, yet, if he have made a suitable improvement of the advantages—the talents committed to him, he may enjoy an humble hope that those whom God *justified* he will also *glorify* ; “ that those who after a patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality, shall obtain eternal life.”

A BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

To the Editor of the Bible Christian.

Waterford, 20th Sept. 1830.

I HOPE “ A Unitarian Christian ” will follow up the excellent remarks that appeared in your Number for August.

We want such excitements in the South. Too long have we lain dormant, too long have we cowered under the odium the orthodox have cast on us. Their zeal seems to have swallowed ours up. Time was, when the truth was whispered in closets and secret chambers, and the performance of its sacred institutes considered as among the deeds of darkness. Fear held the opinions and thoughts of men. Few were found to avow the Truth, and scarce one to become her champion. But, thanks be unto God ! those times are passed. No longer shall the scattered few, sorrow as those that have no hope. A brighter day is approaching, and I hail your pamphlet as its opening dawn.

I should not write thus, but I know there are many of both sexes, who are anxious for the spread of the

opinions you profess, and who are able, both from time and capability, to forward them by such compositions; and I wish to impress it on them, that they are culpable for not doing so. Alas! for Waterford; we have nothing to boast of. There seems no spirit among us, and long, I fear, shall we remain so. But, no! it cannot be; the Truth must be declared, and she shall be made manifest: "She is not dead, she only sleepeth." I am rejoiced, however, to see her alive in Cork. A few months ago, when there, I attended a most animating and delightful meeting of the Unitarian Society. About 50 members of both sexes met in a room rented for the purpose in a central part of the town. The Scriptures are read and commented on; other books, chiefly of a doctrinal character, are also read and discussed, and the evening closes with prayer. Such meetings are admirably adapted for making men well informed on the doctrines they profess, and for extending that knowledge by their combined exertions. Their individual zeal is excited and nourished, and their judgment matured by the intercourse. This Society was begun on the 1st of March last. The members assembled, I understand, at first once a month, but soon they found the meetings too few, and too distant, and have changed them to once a fortnight. I enclose their printed statement, which was given to me—[which the reader will find annexed to this article.]

Much has been said of the odium which the Orthodox put on us, Unitarians. It is fast disappearing in Cork. I am convinced, that it is in a great measure owing to ourselves, that this opprobrium has continued so long; and it depends on ourselves to cast it off by our open and fearless avowal and support of Unitarianism.

Let each of us consider that "the truth as it is in Jesus" depends on our individual exertions, and that we are, each of us, "as a city that is set on a hill that cannot be hid."

CLIO.

[CLIO will see, by our present number, that "A Unitarain Christian" is following up his excellent remarks.—EDITORS.]

Cork Branch of the Irish Unitarian Christian Society.

THE Irish Unitarian Christian Society was formed for the purpose of extending the knowledge and belief of what its members regard as the pure and uncorrupted Doctrines of Christianity.—

With similar views of the value and importance of those doctrines, and an equal desire for their more extensive propagation,—the **CORK BRANCH** has been associated. Its leading objects are:—

To endeavour to produce a more full and general conviction of the sufficiency of the **HOLY SCRIPTURES**, as the sole rule of Faith and Practice.

To maintain the right, and promote the exercise of Free Inquiry and Individual Judgment on religious subjects, as being alike the privilege and the duty of all.

To confirm in its members, and universally to promote belief in the fundamental doctrine of the **BIBLE** that “there is but **ONE** God, the Father,” a doctrine thus unequivocally expressed by our Saviour in prayer “to his Father, and our Father, his God and our God.” “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.”

To extend the influence of the devotional and practical parts of Revelation, that men may be “doers of the word and not hearers only,” knowing that “as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

The following means are those by which the attainment of the above named objects is sought.—

By pecuniary and other aid, assisting the Parent Society in such measures as this Branch may deem best calculated to extend the knowledge and practice of true religion.

By producing sympathy and co-operation among the many who believe in the simple and undivided Unity of “God, even the **FATHER**,” thus encouraging their fearless, but temperate avowal of this great doctrine, which they believe to be truly consistent with the teachings of Revelation, and eminently calculated to advance the virtue and happiness of mankind.

By holding frequent meetings for Scripture and other religious reading, conversation and prayer.

By the circulation of such Religious and Moral publications as seem calculated to induce and facilitate inquiry into the word of truth—to the end that all may “search the Scriptures,—none making them afraid, and—every man being fully persuaded in his own mind—and knowing the truth, the truth may make him free.”

ARRANGEMENTS.

The **Cork Branch** of the Irish Unitarian Christian Society is composed of Members and annual Subscribers.

The Society meets for religious and moral reading, conversation and prayer, from Eight until Ten o'clock, on the evening of every alternate Monday.

All minor arrangements are regulated by an open Committee of Eleven Members, which sits in the Society's room, on the evening of every Monday succeeding that of the Public Meeting.

This Society deeming it highly important that its members be such as regulate their lives and conversation by the religious prin-

ciples they profess, and being desirous to recognize the right of any Society to choose its associates, has adopted the following Regulation:—That on a complaint being preferred by Two Members, of immoral conduct on the part of any Member or Subscriber, the Committee shall enquire into the complaint, and if it be well founded, a majority of the Members of the Society may, at a Special Meeting, exclude such Member or Subscriber.

The funds of the Society are derived from Annual Subscriptions and from Donations.

Candidates for admission, as Members, having been proposed and seconded in Committee, are elected or rejected by a majority of votes; the adventitious distinctions of rank or station forming no bar to admission.

The Female and Junior Unitarian friends of members are admissible as annual Subscribers and are entitled to attend the open meetings of the Society.

Unitarian Christians are admissible as Visitors, on the introduction of any member of the Society; persons of any other religious denomination on the introduction of three of the Committee.

The Chairman of each public meeting is appointed by the Committee, his peculiar duty being to open the meeting by reading a portion of Scripture and to close it with Prayer.

The Readers for each evening are also appointed in Committee. The selection of subjects is discretionary, but with reference to the leading objects of the Society.

As the Society, though fully conscious of the important aid which interchange of mind affords to mutual instruction, would anxiously guard against mere debate, the Chairman, as sole judge of order, possesses a discretionary power to interrupt conversation and cause reading to be proceeded with.

Committee for the present year—Wm. Connell, Richard Bowden, William Bowden, Thomas Jennings, Samuel King, James Lane, Alexander McClise, Walter Richards Osborne, John Osborne, Isaac Varian, Isaac Stephen Varian; Samuel King, Treasurer; William Connell, Secretary.

ORTHODOX MISQUOTATION OF A UNITARIAN WRITER.

I was lately induced by the entreaties of an Orthodox friend to read Dr. Gregory's Letter on the Divinity of Christ. From my previous knowledge of the Doctor's character and talents, I was *disposed* to think he would treat the subject as a Christian ought; and I did expect that when he undertook to combat the opinions of those who conscientiously differed from him, he would have done so without employing offensive language, which only tends to weaken the cause it is intended to strengthen. Throughout his work he calls Unitarians, Soci-

nians, although he ought to have been aware, that the term Socinian may, to a certain extent, be applied to the Orthodox—inasmuch as they worship Jesus Christ. Dr. Drummond, in the introduction to his Essay on the Trinity, says, “that Orthodoxy brands them all (Unitarians) with the name of Socinians, though in truth there is no Socinian in Ireland, nor any approximation to it, except amongst these who declaim against it most loudly.” As to Dr. Gregory’s *reasons* for adopting the term Socinian, they are any thing but satisfactory. The charge of misquotation should not be lightly or inconsiderately brought against any one; and although I doubt not that many instances might be adduced from the same work, I shall, for the present, bring only one. You will find it in a note on the text, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.” Dr. Gregory states, “it ought to be added, to the honour of Dr. Carpenter, that after he had selected ‘God is thy throne,’ as one of the most important *improved* renderings, he admitted in his ‘Letters to Mr. Veysie,’ that the idiom of the Greek *forbids* our so rendering it.” On reading this, I was surprised that Dr. Carpenter could have made such a contradictory admission, and I was also surprised that Dr. Gregory could give him any honour for it. For what honour does Dr. Carpenter deserve, for selecting as an important *improved* rendering, what the idiom of the Greek *forbids* being so rendered. I confess this puzzled me not a little; but when I recollected Dr. Gregory’s uncandid manner of treating Socinians and Socinian arguments, as he calls them, I thought, before coming to a conclusion unfavourable to the character of Dr. Carpenter, I ought to refer to his Letters to Mr. Veysie. I did so—and in a moment the difficulty vanished. The following are Dr. Carpenter’s words on the text in question: “The Hebrew allows of rendering ‘God is thy throne,’ equally with the common rendering: but the idiom of the Greek better suits the latter.” The difference between the idiom of the Greek better suiting the rendering “Thy throne, O God,” and its *forbidding* the rendering “God is thy throne,” is too obvious to require any comment from me. In his other observations on the same text, Dr. Carpenter states, “that agreeably to the latitude of the Hebrew language, the Psalmist addresses *Solomon* as *Elohim*: ‘Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever—

therefore GOD, even THY GOD,' &c. There could surely be no reason why the author of this Epistle, a *Jew*, familiar with the *Hebrew* idiom, writing to the Hebrews, should hesitate in applying to the *Man Christ Jesus*, an appellation which the Psalmist applies to *Solomon*."—Dr. Carpenter, in his note to this passage, says Dr. Pye Smith (*Scrip. Test.* Vol. I, p. 238) very justly remarks, that "the term *God* would be attached to Solomon in a sense *so far inferior* to that in which it was intended for the Messiah, as the limited and temporary kingdom of the former falls short of the extent and duration destined for the latter."

AN ANTI-SOCINIAN.

A REVIEW OF SOME MODERN SYNODS.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 405.)

ENGLISH CONVOCATION.

IN three former papers* of this series, an account was given of the origin, constitution, formalities, and some earlier transactions of the English and Irish Convocations. In the memorable events, and frequent changes in the Church, which took place between the Reformation and the Restoration of Charles II., when its condition was finally fixed, they were debarred from taking an active part; but the privileges and immunities of the inferior Clergy underwent considerable alterations during that period. In particular, instead of taxing themselves as formerly, the Clergy were taxed in common with the people, in Parliament. This practice began in 1664. By the original constitution, the Lords Spiritual and Clergy were esteemed one of the three Estates, and met in Ecclesiastical Assemblies, to give their own money and settle their secular rights. This was the origin of the clause in the summons of the Bishops, called *Præmunientes*, by which they were directed to require the inferior Clergy to appear in Parliament by their Representatives. Thus the clergy obtained a place among the temporal commons, as the Prelates had long

* Bible Christian, Nos. VII, VIII, IX.

before, among the temporal Lords; but they met in a distinct assembly, and only for the purpose of aiding the King by grants of money and petitioning for redress of grievances, or extension of liberties. Matters of Doctrine and Discipline belonged to the two Provincial Assemblies of the Bishops of York and Canterbury.

After the Reformation, they gave their subsidies as before; but these were generally confirmed by Parliament. By degrees these Ecclesiastical Assemblies and Parliamentary Convocations coalesced. They were then subject to Parliamentary taxes as well as to their own subsidies; and the Body of the Clergy were too much at the mercy of the Convocational Divines, many of whom were court chaplains looking for preferment, and might raise their own fortunes by laying heavier burdens on their brethren. It was, therefore, agreed, that the Clergy should tacitly recede from the right of taxing themselves, and be included in the Money Bills of the Commons. In consequence of this arrangement, they lost the privilege of petitioning for redress of grievances, in exchange for their subsidies; but, in lieu of this, the Rectors and Vicars obtained the right of voting for Members of Parliament, by virtue of their glebes, which are freeholds under 8th Hen. VI. c. 7. They tendered their votes in right of their glebes at County Elections, which have ever since been received with tacit approbation."

It might naturally be presumed, that they would also have been entitled to seats in the House of Commons; and, whatever difficulty might be started as to Priests and beneficed clergy, it could not affect Deacons, who could neither sit nor be represented in Convocation.—There is a very ample and able argument on these subjects in Christians' Notes on Blackstone. It appears, I think, that the Clergy possessed all these rights, and that it was thought necessary to extinguish them by particular acts of Parliament in England, Scotland, and Ireland. This measure was adopted last in England, in the case of Mr. Horne Tooke, who had taken Priests' orders early in life, and was a member of Parliament when the act passed to exclude his order in future; but not to take effect during that Parliament, in which, of course, he continued to sit. This looks like an acknowledgment, that it was an arbitrary law, not founded on any

constitutional principles. As to the expediency of this measure, the same author observes, "that sound policy and the most important interests of Society require, that the ambition of a Clergyman should be confined to his own profession, and that piety and learning should be the surest recommendation to advancement."

From the time of the Restoration, some wise and pious men were anxious to effect a Comprehension, so as to take the great body of Puritanical and Non-conforming Clergy and their people into the Church. Others would have been content with such alterations in the Liturgy, as might satisfy the scruples of the principal Dissenters. King William was favourable to conciliatory measures among Protestants, and issued a Commission for this purpose in 1689. This affair originated in the House of Lords. While the Toleration Act was in progress, a proviso was proposed, that a number of Clergy and Laity might be empowered to prepare materials for such a Reformation, as might be fit to offer to the King and Parliament. This was strenuously opposed by the Clergy, and rejected by a small majority of the Lords.

The dissentient Peers expressed their disapprobation of this conduct of the Clergy in the following words of their Protest :—

"By *Romish* Principles, the Clergy alone are permitted to meddle in religion, but with us, when the Church is acknowledged and defined to consist of clergy and laity, they can have no such claim. The things to be considered are of human institution, and derived from the civil power. As to any differences and delays, which might arise from the mixture of laymen and ecclesiastics (in the Commission) they could afford no ground of objection, except the clergy had distinct interests and designs from the laity ; in which case it would be proper to exclude *one or other*, not from the present commission only, but from the Upper House of Parliament itself."

Upon this Tillotson advised the King to refer the affair to an assembly of Divines, to satisfy the clergy and stop the mouths of papists, who reproach our Reformation as built upon Parliamentary authority. Accordingly, it was agreed in council, that a select number of learned divines should be appointed by the Royal Mandate, to consult and lay their opinions, first before the Convocation, and then before Parliament. The Commission was directed to

ten Bishops and twenty Dignitaries. Two of the Bishops, and two Doctors withdrew, thinking that too much had been done already by the Toleration; and declaring, that they would not concur in rendering conformity more easy. Besides, if the church consented to alterations, she would seem to confess that she had been in the wrong. A good Protestant argument!—They never adverted to the great change made in the Ritual by the Church of Rome, and, among ourselves, by Edward VI., Elizabeth, James, and Charles II.—The Jacobites and the Universities joined in the same cry. The Church was in danger. Accordingly great interest was made every where in the choice of Convocation-men; and it was quickly visible, that the designs of the King and the Ecclesiastical Commission would be frustrated. These, however, prosecuted their work, till it was finished: and agreed upon such alterations, as, in the opinion of Neal, would probably have brought in three parts out of four of the Dissenters. These concessions, however, have never yet seen the light.—Among them are the following:—The omission of Apocryphal Lesson; Athanasian Creed left optional; a new version of the Psalms; a collection of words and expressions in the Liturgy to be omitted; Singing in Cathedrals to be laid aside; and Legendary Saints' days; the Cross in Baptism to be left optional to the parent; Kneeling at the Sacrament left indifferent; Lent declared to consist in acts of devotion, not distinction of meats; *Priest* changed for *Minister*; Use of the Surplice left to the discretion of the Bishop; God Fathers and God Mothers to be omitted, if desired, and children presented in their parents' names; Re-ordination of those ordained by Presbyters to be only conditional. Such were the voluntary concessions of ten Bishops and twenty Divines, among whom were the most eminent men that ever graced the English Church: Burnet, Stittingfleet, Tillotson, Beveridge, Patrick, Tennison, &c.

When the Convocation assembled, their temper appeared in the choice of Dr. Jane for their Prolocutor, in preference to Dr. Tillotson. He had drawn up the famous Oxford decree in favour of passive obedience and non-resistance; and was one of the two Doctors, who had withdrawn from the Commission. He was a

learned Divine and Professor of Divinity at Oxford; and combined the two characters of a High Churchman and a High Calvinist, a rare combination at that time as well as at present.

On his election, he addressed the Bishop of London, who presided during the suspension of Sancroft, in a Latin address, concluding with the words of the Barons at the Parliament at Merton. "We will not consent that the laws of England be changed." *Nobimus Leges Angliæ mutari.* The Bishop replied in the same language, closing with the advice of Joseph to his brethren: "See that ye fall not out by the way:" *Ne tu multu amini consiliis vestris.* The King sent them a message, desiring them to consider of such things as by his order should be laid before them, with a due and impartial zeal for the peace and good of the church. But the Lower House quickly came to a resolution, "not to enter into any debates in relation to alterations." It was not without difficulty carried to make a decent address to the King, thanking him for his promise of protection: and, because the address, which the Bishops sent down, acknowledged the protection which the Protestant Religion in general, and the church of England in particular, had received from his Majesty, they would not agree to it, because it imported their owning some common union with the Foreign Churches, expressed by the words—"This and all other Protestant Churches."—The King, observing that matters ran so high, broke up the Session, and kept them from doing mischief by prorogations for a course of ten years.

On account of their peevish and testy opposition to the Bishops, the Lower House was sometimes accused of inclining to Presbyterian principles; so that they thought it necessary to present a declaration of their belief in the divine right of Episcopacy; but they were told, that even this would be reckoned a new canon and subject them to a *Præmunire*. Such was the condition of this venerable Convocation.

Such, too, was the happy effect of the foresight of Henry VIII., and his jealousy of the clergy, that while Secheverel was able to blow up all England into a flame, the whole body of the Bishops, and the representatives of all the chapters and parishes in Convocation assembled, could not dare to take a single step without a pre-

vious license from the crown. While the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland exercise spiritual jurisdiction over that kingdom, the Ecclesiastical Parliament of England cannot declare their belief in the Apostolical Succession of their Bishops. The Presbyterian Synods in Ireland, and the Methodistical Conference, are invested with more authority than the whole body of the clergy of the Church of England.

When, at length, the Convocation was permitted to meet for despatch of business, on the 10th of February, 1700-1, a serious dissension commenced between the Upper and Lower Houses. The Convocation being prorogued, as usual, by the Archbishop, to meet again in the same place, the Jerusalem Chambers, on a certain day, the Lower House, contrary to usage, continued sitting, and proceeded to some business of no moment; after which the Prolocutor announced an adjournment by consent of the House, to meet again on the appointed day, in Henry VII's chapel. Being sent for by the Archbishop, some inquiry was made concerning their conduct; and they were again prorogued in the same terms. When they assembled accordingly, after some intermediate sessions, and were dismissed to their own House, they carried up a report of a committee appointed to search for precedents, concerning Prorogations. This was referred to a committee of Bishops, and the Archbishop delivered to the Prolocutor the form of an address to the King, for the concurrence of the Lower House. To this they agreed, with the alteration of *Reformed Religion* into *Reformed Churches*. Their attempt at disunion appears to have even passed over without further censure; and they proceeded to bring up a representation against J. Toland's book, entitled *Christianity not Mysteriorious*.

Among the passages selected for condemnation, are the following: "No doubt on't as far as any Church allows mysteries, so far is it anti-christian, and may, with a great deal of justice, though little honour, claim kindred with the scarlet whore."—"To speak truly, contradiction and mystery are two emphatical ways of saying nothing."—"Faith is so far from being an explicit assent to any thing above reason, that this notion contradicts the ends of religion, the nature of man, and the goodness and wisdom of God."—"I could draw out this pa-

rallel (between the ancient Heathen and new-coined christian-mysteries,) much larger; but here is enough to shew how christianity became mysterious, and how so divine an institution did, through the craft and ambition of priests and philosophers, derogate into mere Paganism." What advantage *they* could expect from republishing these sentences, it is not easy to conceive. The same imprudence has been persevered in to the present day, both in politics and religion.

Upon taking legal advice, the Bishops found that they could not prosecute the author in their convocational capacity, without incurring the penalty of a *Præmunire*; but recommended it to the attention of the Bishop in whose diocese the offence had been committed.

In May, 1701, the Lower House prepared a censure on the exposition of the 39 Articles, by Burnet, Bishop of Sarum, and then endeavoured to annoy that Prelate, who had been so instrumental in bringing about the Revolution, by a frivolous complaint of interfering with their privileges; but, when called on for particulars and proofs, both fell to the ground. Their claims, with respect to the right of prorogation, they persevered in during the life of King William, with a peevish pertinacity; and would have persisted after his death, on pretence that the Convocation might assemble as long as Parliament. They endeavoured to revive these disputes in the first Convocation of the succeeding reign, by appealing to the Queen, to call the question "into her own Royal Audience." The Queen promised an answer; but none was returned. These indecent dissensions continued with an increasing bitterness, till 1706, when the Queen wrote them a letter, severely censuring the proceedings of the Lower House. In the following year she had occasion to write a similar letter; and still the clergy and their Prolocutor continued their contumacy till subdued by the terror of Archiepiscopal censures. They even wished their Prolocutor to set them at defiance, but he preferred submission.

In 1711, the Convocation found other employment, equally agreeable, though not less perplexing, the prosecution of William Whiston, Professor of Mathematics in Cambridge, "a learned man, of sober and exemplary life, (says Barret,) but much set on paradoxes, who fell on the reviving of the Arian heresy; though he was

partly Apollinarist, partly Arian ; for he thought that the *Nous* or Word was all the soul that acted in our Saviour's body." For these tenets, he was censured at Cambridge, and expelled the University. Upon this he wrote a *Vindication* of himself and his Doctrine, and dedicated it to the Convocation, promising a larger work on the same subject. It is very amusing to read of the labyrinth of perplexity into which this act of assurance or plain dealing, or perhaps native simplicity of Whiston involved the Convocation. The question was, whether they could censure or pass any judicial sentence on the book or the author. Were they a Court ? Could they summon witnesses ? Would any step in this business entangle them in the penalties of the *Act of Submission* ? Precedents were contradictory ; the Judges were divided ; and said, they might change their opinions when the cause came to be argued. All was at a stand. The Upper House addressed the Queen. She sent them the conflicting opinions of Judges and Law Officers. In case they should proceed, two doubts remained—how was the Court to be constituted—of Bishops alone, or joined with Presbyters ? In case of appeal, who were to be the delegates ? Was the sentence of the Archbishop and his twenty-seven suffragans and all their Clergy to be judged by the Archbishop of York and his three suffragans ? The Bishops could only venture to extract some heretical propositions, which were sent to the Queen, and she promised to consider of them. At their meeting in winter, no answer had come ; two Bishops were sent for it ; but she could not tell what was become of the paper. So, a new extract was sent to her. But she "has not yet (says Barret) thought fit to send any answer to it." Thus the Primate, with all his Bishops and Clergy, could do nothing without the lady.

At the opening of this Convocation, Atterbury, their Prolocutor, brought up a Representation, which contained a most violent declamation against the Government from the time of the Revolution. This was rejected by the Upper House. At the close, the Upper House sent down a Representation which was rejected by the Lower ; so, none was presented to the Queen. About this time sermons and pamphlets were published against the validity of Lay, that is, of Presbyterian Baptism. The Archbishop and Bishops agreed to censure this ri-

gour; but the Clergy could not be prevailed on to consent. This was casting out all foreign Protestants, and the Church of Scotland, immediately after the forming an union with that nation and Church. To this union, however, the Convocation was averse; so that the Queen was obliged to take the unusual step of proroguing them for three weeks, during the sitting of Parliament, till the Act was passed, to prevent their clamours.

The celebrated Dr. Hoadley, afterwards Bishop of Bangor, also fell under the displeasure of the Provocation, on account of a sermon, in which he denied that the Clergy could claim any civil power; but to prevent any further proceedings, they were prorogued by a special order from Court, before they could present their representation to the Upper House. Since which time, the Convocation have never been allowed to sit to do business.

The form of their meeting at present is as follows: at the meeting of a new Parliament, the Primate, with his Dean, who is Bishop of Lincoln, and the dignitaries of the province of Canterbury, repair to St. Paul's.—There they are joined by the civilians from Doctor's Commons. The Liturgy having been read in Latin, they hear a *Concio ad Clerum*. Then, after the Archbishop's benediction in Latin, a procession is formed to the adjoining Chapter Houses. The Convocation vote an address to the King, and immediately adjourn *sine die*.

1826, Nov.—The Convocation of Canterbury presented an address to his Majesty, expressive of their apprehensions of certain endeavours making, and to be made, against the good of the Church, and their trust in his Majesty's protection, as their head. In the King's answer are these words: "I rely with the utmost confidence on your zealous exertions to *promote true piety and virtue*—to reclaim those who are in error by the *force of divine truth*; and to uphold and extend among my people, the preference which is so justly due to the pure doctrine and service of our Established Church.—That Church has every claim to my constant care and protection—I will watch over its interests with unwearied solicitude, and confidently trust, that I shall be enabled, by the blessing of Divine Providence, to

maintain it in the full possession of every *legitimate* privilege." In this reply, there is a strict caution and reserve, intimating that the *danger of the church and the success of its enemies* must result from their own *remissness* in maintaining *true piety and virtue*, and their using other means of extending their influence than the *force of Divine Truth*.

The Convocation is strongly marked with the features of the other members of the Synodical Family. They are enemies to the diffusion of Religious Liberty and Truth, and constantly at variance among themselves. The Bishops, indeed, from their connexion and intercourse with Court, and a regard to their own dignity, conducted themselves with more temper and decorum, but the inferior clergy were uniformly factious and intemperate, intolerant and intolerable. Even Queen Anne would not endure them. ERASMUS.

ON FREE INQUIRY IN MATTERS OF RELIGION.

"That noble charter of the free-born soul."

Man is every where represented in Scripture as a free moral agent, capable of distinguishing between good and evil, and accountable for his choice—it follows then, that he not only has a *right*, but it is also his imperative *duty*, to think and act for himself in matters of religion, and that it is unwarrantable for any authority, civil or sacred, to controul him; and yet on no other subject whatever, have the great virtues of Justice and Charity been so often infringed on. The tyrannical spirit of former ages, under the garb of religious zeal, which doomed to the fire, the scaffold, and the torture, the victim of their persecution, exerted less fearful influence, than the giant Opinion does in the present day, on the minds of many—spell-bound, they surrender to others the great charter of their nature—the power of thinking for themselves—shun all who cannot utter the magic sesame—the shibboleth of their sect—shrink from all free inquiry as from contagion, and think it a merit to impose on all within the sphere of their influence, the heart-withering bondage in which they themselves struggle to live.

Regarding the freedom of the human mind as the inalienable birthright of every human being, I cannot be indifferent to the effect of those systems, which would debar us the use of our intellectual faculties, and immerse in conventical gloom and mystery, the light of Divine Truth. Knowledge has been even favourable to the interests of truth and virtue. The blind ignorance of the world, in the dark ages of Christianity, secured the triumph of sacerdotal power, and what but ignorance at the present day, perpetuates the reign of bigotry and spiritual bondage. To the spirit of inquiry we owe every advance we have hitherto made in knowledge and reformation, from our first emerging from papal desolation to the present hour. Truth fears not the ordeal of strict inquiry and investigation, but rises brighter from the contest—based on a pillar of adamant it defies alike the subtleties of argument or the force of prejudice.

“Oh ! let us seek it where ’tis found,
On Christian or on Heathen ground—
The flower’s divine where’er it blows.”

That there have been different opinions as to what is Truth, does not alter her divine nature. The conclusion that the mind arrives at, after fair and candid investigation, is truth to him. The untutored Indian believes it to be revealed to him in his Vedas and Shar-tem—the Mahometan, in the pages of the Koran—the Roman Catholic, that she sits enthroned on infallibility in the chair of St. Peter; while in England, the land of freedom and civilization, the believer in the creed of St. Athanasius condemns to unutterable woe, the unbeliever in the doctrine of the Trinity. Far as I consider even the least objectionable of these systems from the truth, yet I am firmly persuaded, that whenever there is a sincere, conscientious, and devout worshipper, no matter to what party he professedly belongs, there is the temple of truth; and that the pious oblations of barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, if offered in sincerity, will be accepted by Him who is no respecter of persons—

“In whose pure sight all virtue doth succeed.”

The contracted and exclusive spirit which would confine the benevolence of the Deity to the narrow precincts of sect or party, can have no place in the breasts

of those who are truly followers of Jesus, for he severely censured the sectarian prejudices of the Jews and Samaritans who professed to have "no dealings with each other"—rebuked the blind zeal which would have called down fire from heaven on their enemies, and whose new commandment was, that all mankind should love one another.

There is no creed from which the well-constituted mind will not draw the needful food of piety and virtue—as a living writer beautifully expresses it, "the goodness of man, like the tree, which Moses cast into the bitter waters of Marah will often sweeten the bitterness and neutralise the venom of his creed." The intentions of the heart may be pure, although the mind be under mistaken principles. The different degree of intellectual vigour possessed by different minds, in their search after truth, and the different kinds of external influences under which they form conclusions, must unavoidably perpetuate diversity of opinion, therefore *involuntary* error may plead for excuse at the bar of justice, but *indolence* dare not. "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right." Those who wish to drink pure, must apply at the fountain head, for all the diverging streams are more or less polluted. To the Scriptures I would urge all to make their first and chief appeal, not to a few partial isolated texts, but to the general tenor of the whole, and then use their reason, in confirming what revelation teaches. If the sneers, the cavils, the opposition of the world, cause him to withdraw from this infallible guide, the spirit of Christ dwells not in him. It is painful, no doubt, to the social feelings of our nature, to meet from former friends the cold glance of suspicion, or averted look of contempt, and requires a heroism in virtue which the lukewarm in religion cannot hope to attain. This is the "fear of man which bringeth a snare," and which will cost us many efforts to repel, but the object is great, and great also will be the reward.

With what a noble superiority does Unitarianism rise above all the systems of *infallibility* devised by the interest and ingenuity of man. It causes the glorious perfections of Deity to shine on our hearts in the full splendour of his undivided majesty—it extends to the whole world the light of his countenance, and disperses

the clouds which the misguided Calvinist would throw over the benighted Heathen ; and we trust that it will go on “conquering and to conquer,” and that it will, through its own native energy, extend to the whole human race, the consoling power of its doctrines.

“ Ours are the ample views that, unconfined,
Stretch to the utmost walks of human kind—
Ours the spirit, that with widest plan
Brother and brother binds, and man to man.”

It would be our prayer, that wherever reason dwells, there may the refining, vivifying truths of Unitarianism dwell—may the rays of its celestial purity enlighten every breast ; and the human mind, freed from every chain, be free to explore the regions of truth and happiness. It is a subject of deep regret, that full justice has not been done to our cause in the southern parts of our Island. Our ministers are too fond of “laying this flattering unction to their souls,” that Christian charity and a desire of living peaceably with all mankind, induce them to refrain from exposing popular errors, and propagating unpopular truths ; and, under the delusive garb of *moderation*, *candour*, and *prudence*, they hide a love of ease, and lukewarmness in the cause of that religion, which Jesus died to establish, and in defence of which numbers of the best of men have sacrificed their lives. Thus is it left to struggle, unaided, unassisted by its ministers, against popular odium and misrepresentation ; and but for its intrinsic worth, and the praise-worthy zeal of a few individuals it must soon have become extinct. How unworthy a Christian minister are these miserable, time-serving expedients—this conciliating of the world, by studied ambiguity, forgetting that their concern only should be to render themselves acceptable to God, and his approbation their reward.

The time is now arrived when the mass of the people desire something more stimulating, than the stated weekly discourse of dry morality, doled out in measured cadences, or with sickly sensibility, inconsistent with the energetic and powerful language of a mind intent on things divine. (But as these remarks more properly belong to a subject, of which I mean to treat in another article, I shall not enlarge on it at present.) People of every class should be compelled to feel the dignity of

of their nature, and to judge for themselves of those truths in which all ought to be equally interested. A minister has no longer the dread of penal laws to excuse silence on those momentous topics—he can no longer urge to his inquiring people, the “*unfavourableness of the times*” for withholding from them his warm, unqualified assistance and support, in clearing the way to the temple of Truth. A new road has now been opened for their exertions, in the establishment of Associations, and they are called on by every principle of gratitude and duty, to rouse inactive minds, by their words and actions, to a participation of its advantages. The man who is ashamed to vindicate it openly, deserves not its consolations and pleasures. A minister enjoys a high privilege, in being selected by the Almighty to the office of ministering to the spiritual wants of his people; and if he do not give it his whole heart, if he will not make personal sacrifices of ease or comfort for its sake, and honour it by a holier conversation, and more of the simplicity of the founders of our faith, he can have no interest in the assurance, that “they who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.” If his exertions were even to rouse one of his congregation to become an active labourer in the common cause, his ministry hath not been in vain; for as in mechanics the slightest impulse given to a body in motion, accelerates its speed, and causes it to move with surer aim; so in the moral world, no individual, however insignificant, but may, if disposed, do something towards relieving the pressure of external circumstances, and accelerating the progress of Truth.

In ages of gross ignorance and mental darkness, and under every opposing circumstance that the power of man could invent, there have not been wanting minds of unbending and fearless integrity, who have stood, undismayed, the malignity of spiritual intolerance, and with their eyes steadily fixed on the light of truth, have pursued it “through good and evil report;” and shall we who are now “at ease in Zion,” when the fires of persecution are extinguished, and all have permission to worship God in the manner their conscience dictates—shall we, in those days of freedom, cloke or disavow our liberal principles, because they are sullied by the unhallowed breath of worldly scorn? A higher destiny

awaits us, than the approval or rewards of man. The course of time is bearing us rapidly on to the silent tomb. In the evening of our days, when the lamp of life burns dimly, will the good opinion of the world reconcile us to the loss of the applause of conscience? If the opinions we profess are calculated to promote the happiness of mankind, although we may not live to see their effect, let us not sleep on our posts, let not the signals of passing hours sound on our ears unheeded, nor the days glide on while we indulge the slumber of moral procrastination.

A UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN.

SCRIPTURE ITS OWN INTERPRETER.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 359.)

1 JOHN, i. 2.—“For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness and show unto you, that Eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.”

—— 3.—“And truly our fellowship is *with the Father, and with the Son, Jesus Christ.*”

—— ii. 1.—“And if any man sin, we have an *advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous.*”

—— 22.—“Who is a liar, but he that denieth that *Jesus is the Christ.* He is anti-Christ that denieth the *Father and the Son.*”

—— 23.—“Whosoever denieth the Son the same hath not the Father.” (See also verse 24.)

—— iii. 8.—“For this purpose the *Son of God* was manifested that he might destroy the works of the Devil.”

—— 23.—“And this is his (God's) commandment, that we should believe *on the name of his Son, Jesus Christ,* and love one another as he gave us commandment.”

—— iv. 2. 3.—“Every spirit that confesseth that *Jesus Christ is come in the flesh* is of God—and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God, &c.”

—— 9.—“In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that *God sent his only begotten Son* into the world that we might live through him.”

—— 10.—“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, *and sent his Son* to be the propitiation for our sins.”

—— 14.—“And we have seen and do testify that the Father *sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.*”

—— 15.—“Whosoever shall confess that *Jesus is the Son of God,* God dwelleth in him and he in God.”

—— v. 1.—“Whosoever believeth that *Jesus is the Christ,* is born of God.”

JOHN, v. 5.—“Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that *Jesus is the Son of God*.”

— 9.—“If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater, for this is the *witness of God* which he hath testified by his Son: (See also verses 10, 11, 12, 13.)

— 20.—“And we know that *the Son of God* is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and Eternal Life.”

2 JOHN, i. 3.—“Grace be with you and peace from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, *the Son of the Father*, in truth and love.”

— 7.—“For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that *Jesus Christ is come in the flesh*.”

JUDE, 1.—“Jude the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father and preserved in *Jesus Christ*, and called.”

— 4.—“Turning the Grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the *only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ*.”

— 21.—“Keep yourselves in the *love of God*, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto Eternal Life.”

REVELATION, i. 1.—“The Revelation of *Jesus Christ* which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass.”

— 4. 5.—“Grace be unto you and peace from him which is, which was, and which is to come, and from the Seven Spirits which are before his Throne, and from *Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the Kings of the earth*. Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen.”

— 17.—“And when I saw him [the son of man] I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last.

— 18.—“I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen: and have the keys of hell and of death.”

— ii. 8.—“These things saith the first and the last which was dead and is alive.”

— 27.—“As the vessels of the potter shall they be broken to shivers: *Even as I received of my father*.”

— iii. 2.—“For I [*i. e.* the Son of Man] have not found thy works perfect before God.”

— 5.—“And I will not blot out his name out of life but I will confess his name *before my Father and before his angels*.”

— 12.—“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.”

— 14.—“These things saith the Amen, *the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God*.”

REV. iii. 21.—“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne; even as I also overcame and *set down with my Father in his throne.*”

—— v. 9.—“And they sung a new song saying [unto the Lamb] Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain and *hast redeemed us to God* by thy blood, &c. and hast made us unto our God kings and priests.”

—— 13.—“Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.”

—— xii. 10. 11.—“Now is come salvation, strength, and the *kingdom of our God* and the *power of his Christ*: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night, and they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, &c.”

—— 17.—“..... which keep the *commandments of God* and have the *testimony of Jesus Christ.*”

—— xiv. 12.—“Here are they that keep the *commandments of God* and the *faith of Jesus.*”

—— xv. 3.—“And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb, saying, great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty: just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints.”

—— xxi. 22. 25.—“For the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”

—— xxii. 16.—“I *Jesus* have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the *root* and the *offspring* of David, and the *bright and morning star.*”

I have given in this series of texts, what appear to me to be strong reasons for believing that the doctrine of the Trinity forms no essential part of the Christian scheme. I differ from the Trinitarians, in believing that there is no equal to the Father Almighty—that the Son is inferior to the God who sent him: the person sent, to him who sent him—the person empowered, to him who gave him power: And I differ from another denomination of Christians, who agree in rejecting the Trinity, because I believe that Christ was not merely a man whom God had deigned to endow with greater power and wisdom than other men. Into all my reasons for differing from them I cannot now enter, any more than I could into all my reasons for not assenting to the doctrine of the Trinity. I feel strongly impressed, from the general strain in which the Apostles speak of Christ, that they did not look upon him as merely one of equal powers, nature, or origin with themselves. At the same time, I grant that they would

have been more explicit if the knowledge of what Christ was before his appearance on earth had been necessary to make a man a Christian. I therefore freely consider both Trinitarians and Socinians as fellow Christians—all acknowledging one master, but differing in many points from one another, as to the light in which they view him.

It appears to me to be very manifest, that Christ is spoken of throughout the New Testament in a way that implies superiority of nature. It is not my intention to enter into those enlarged considerations upon particular texts that prove to my mind that Christ was a superior being before he came into this world, and that in so coming he humbled himself so that when he was rich yet for our sakes he became poor. But what always strikes me with great force is, that the Apostles speak uniformly of Christ in a manner that shows, not that they thought merely that he was the first to tell them of the truths of the Christian Religion, but that they thought him of a higher nature than themselves. This superiority that is most manifestly ascribed to Christ throughout every page of the New Testament, was not a superior power of working miracles—for he had promised them that they should be able to do still greater—nor is it ascribed merely because he had the courage to brave death, for Stephen did so, and Peter was crucified. I think Christ claims to himself in the Gospels such a participation in the divine councils, such a degree of power from the Father, as would in the first instance induce us to think that he was not a mere human prophet—that he came to do an important service—that he knew what this was before he came to do it—that he persevered till it was finished; and that he was rewarded for this humiliation of himself, and this steadfastness to the end, when he returned to the glory which he had with the Father before the world was: *He came* not to be ministered to but to minister, and to give his life a ransom. As this was the object of his coming, he knew it before he came: He came forth from the Father, and came into the world in the same sense as that in which he was to leave the world and go to the Father; and if the latter imply his existence after leaving the world, I think the other implies that he had existed before came into it. I think the same con-

clusion is to be drawn from the claims which he puts forward to the love and gratitude of his followers—indeed the whole of that most interesting event, the crucifixion of Christ, with the concomitant circumstances, seems to me to have a very different air, and affects the mind very differently from the mere account of a righteous man standing up for the truth, and maintaining it to the end. And when the Apostles describe his glory when raised to the right hand of God, I think the glory is somewhat higher than the service deserved, if you consider that it was a mere man that stuck to the truth, as Socrates had done before, and as multitudes have done since. But it strikes me as more harmonious and consistent, when we consider that a pre-existent spirit had for a time abandoned his glorious state to do a signal service to the human race, and that, when this was done, he returned to his former state, and was rewarded with still higher powers and still greater glory, after his ascension.

On this subject of Christ's pre-existence, the *Essay on Socinianism* at the end of the "Confessions of a Member of the Church of England," deserve to be read and considered. It appears to me to be strong and satisfactory; and on the whole I think we have such circumstantial and corroborative evidence on this point, in addition to several express declarations, as is sufficient to prove that our Saviour did exist in a pre-existent state of Glory; but not sufficiently strong to justify us in saying, that the belief in our Lord's pre-existence is essential to our being true Christians here or heirs of eternal bliss hereafter.

Before concluding this series of papers, I will offer a few remarks on the evidence of the nature and dignity of the Messiah from the prophecies concerning him in the Old Testament.

EREUNETES.

ORTHODOX PLANS TO PREVENT RELIGIOUS INQUIRY.

IT is melancholy to witness with what zeal the different sectaries prosecute their labours, in promoting the particular views which they entertain upon the speculative doctrines of the Bible; while the great and essential precepts of Christianity,—those precepts uniformly inculcated by Christ and his apostles, are sunk in the unprofitable contention for ascendancy, and perverted for the purpose of exciting odium against their opponents. To discover the causes of these unhappy differences, to expose their pernicious tendency, and to point out the means of removing their baneful effects to Christianity and to mankind, would be a labour of love, worthy alike of the philanthropic christian and the enlightened philosopher. There is one great obstacle, which, until men become more enlightened, will operate against the labours of such individuals: namely, the jealousy of all sects against any thing that might seem to militate against their particular views.

From the various controversies of opposing sects, it does not appear that they have any recognised standard. The Bible, indeed, is occasionally referred to, as containing the principles which each sect advocates; but, it is obvious, that their particular theological systems are the chief objects to be maintained; and that when the Bible cannot easily be brought to support their views, and when reason and common sense oppose barriers, they are no longer considered as criterions by which the judgment is to be governed, but are cried down as dangerous and insufficient guides.

It is unquestionably owing to this, that many sects, who are strenuous in the support of what they call Orthodoxy, are unwilling to rest their systems upon the Bible alone. They are loud in their encomiums upon it, and make their appeals to it in support of doctrines; but they cannot consent to submit to it as the *only* foundation of their faith; for there is no circumstance which would more strongly excite their suspicion of heresy than to make it the sole ground of Christian belief, and Christian communion. To the same cause may be traced

that odium which has been excited against Reason. They will not submit to have their dogmas subjected to such a fiery ordeal. To be a *Rational Christian* is the greatest reproach which can possibly be conceived by the thorough-paced supporters of Orthodoxy; and the reproachful epithet of *Liberal* is flung in the face of every man who refuses to subscribe their creeds, or hesitates to pronounce damnation upon all that differ from himself.

These are the means resorted to by the various orthodox sects, to excite odium against all who impugn their creeds, and refuse subscription. But it is not sufficient that skilful commanders should confine their exertions to attacks upon the enemy. If they cannot secure the allegiance of their own supporters, their cause will inevitably be lost, though an enemy should never enter the lists against them. In all contests concerning opinions, it is a point of great importance to secure the favourable judgment of mankind. But, if in addition to this, impressions can be made unfavourable to the opposite party, the battle may be said to be almost won. When opinions are founded in reason and the nature of things, it is of the utmost importance for those who oppose them, to keep them as much as possible out of sight, and to make the multitude, who are unacquainted with them, believe that they are so abominable and blasphemous, as to be unfit not only to be entertained by any honest man, but even dangerous to be examined.

To effect these laudable purposes, the leaders of orthodoxy have contrived a few cabalistic words, by the magic of which, their followers are frightened from the examination of all principles opposed to their favourite systems. It is not necessary to know what meaning is attached to these words, or whether there be *any*. Indeed, if their meaning was sufficiently understood, the enchantment, by which they so powerfully operate, would be dissolved. Who would venture upon so hazardous an experiment, as to read a work written by a man contaminated by such damnable heresy, as that of the *Arian*, *Socinian*, *Unitarian*, *Neologist*, *Rational* or *Bible-Christian*! Such soul-destroying heresies are worse than the plague, and more contagious. And then their works are written so plausibly—and there is contained in them so much carnal reasoning—and prying into mysteries—

and scrutinizing of Scripture—and rejecting of interpolations and pious frauds—Oh ! oh ! who that values his immortal soul, and would not have it poisoned and undone for ever, would expose it to such noxious contagion !

It is not to be expected that simple-minded and unlettered individuals, though anxious to know the truth, would incur the fearful risk of exposing themselves to such imminent peril, as that of reading the works of such arch-heretics. It is, therefore, impossible for them to understand the principles of the persons against whom so much odium has been excited. Consequently their pious and disinterested clergy have no apprehension of being detected when they declaim against, and misrepresent the principles and doctrines of their opponents. Though they “confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father,” these holy men can represent them as denying the Lord that bought them. Though they confess that “by the deeds of the law no man can be justified,” and that “there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby they can be saved but through Jesus Christ,” their charitable opponents can represent them as asserting that by their own works they can merit salvation.—It is true, they inculcate the necessity of a holy life and godly conversation, and that “by our works we shall be justified or condemned.” They do not believe in imputed guilt and righteousness, *i. e.* that we can be guilty or righteous in consequence of other men’s actions. They believe, and inculcate, that every man shall answer for his actions ; “that the soul that sinneth, it shall die ;” that “he that doeth righteousness is righteous ; and he that committeth sin is of the devil.” They do not teach that men shall be justified by faith *alone*,”—but that “faith without works is dead, being alone.” They do not believe and teach that God the Father is a *vindictive* and *vengeful* being ; but that “God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” They do not believe in a Trinity, or that God is *three and one at the same time* ; because such a belief is contrary to the Scriptures, which saith, “Hear, O Israel ! the Lord our God is one Lord ;” and because it is opposed to the clearest dictates of reason and common sense, and to every

idea we possess of the nature of things. They do not believe that any creature, but God alone, is the object of divine worship; because Christ himself hath said, "The time is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

A LAYMAN.

THE BIBLE A REPOSITORY OF PRACTICAL WISDOM.

MERE abstract truth is of comparatively little value; for however correct the opinions we may form respecting the perfections of the Divine author of all things, and the duties incumbent on us as his creatures, yet, if our practice be not conformable, it might have been better for us to have remained in ignorance; for the most guilty of all sinners are those who "know the right and yet the wrong pursue." If, however, professing Christians of any sect err in practice, they cannot charge it to the want of clear and explicit instructions, since the Bible is not only a repository of truth, but also a repository of PRACTICAL WISDOM. It abounds with wise rules for the government of our dispositions and manners, by the observance of which we may go on making continual advances towards perfection. The duties which the Bible enjoins us to perform, are such as arise from our nature and condition as men; such as imply an imitation of the Divine excellencies; such as tend to improve our faculties, to exalt our characters, and to promote our happiness; such, consequently, as must approve themselves to the judgment of every wise man. The instructions of the Bible are alike adapted to promote the outward prosperity and the inward peace of individuals; whilst they support the good order and advance the most important interests of Society. There is nothing enjoined which is unnecessary or burdensome; there is nothing omitted which is reasonable or useful; there is nothing forbidden which would not be contrary to our true interests.

Let any one distinctly examine the precepts contained in the Bible, with a view to remark their natural influence upon personal and social happiness, and he will be at no loss to discover upon them the evident charac-

ters of wisdom. Who does not perceive that the strict observance of those precepts which require us to be sober, chaste, and temperate, “to walk in the spirit and not fulfil the lusts of the flesh, to be pure in heart, to take heed that we offend not in word, to clothe ourselves with humility, to be diligent in business, and to be contented with such things as we have,”—who, it is asked, does not perceive that these must be the surest means of preserving to us the blessings of health, prosperity, a fair reputation, and a peaceful mind? Who can doubt that by “rendering to all their due, speaking everyman truth to his neighbour, doing to others as we would that they should do unto us, loving our neighbours as ourselves, and being ready to do every good work,” we shall most effectually provide for the gratification of the best feelings of our hearts; most powerfully engage the esteem and love of all the honest and good around us; and consequently, most certainly lay up in store for ourselves a fund of pleasing reflections and of reasonable expectations against a future day of adversity? What mind, which is not an utter stranger to religious sentiments, can question the satisfaction and delight in the performance of religious duties which is felt by that pious Christian, who, in obedience to the precepts of his Saviour contained in the Bible, loves the Lord his God with all his heart and soul and mind and strength, worships him in spirit and in truth, and commits himself to him in the way of well-doing? It will not be denied, that the religious contemplation and the acts of devotion of such a man, enable him to say with the Psalmist, “It is good for me to draw near to God.” Nor do these precepts contribute to the interests of individuals alone; for there are also many important benefits which result from them to society. By enjoining all those virtues which tend to meliorate the temper and restrain the passions of men, they tear up by the root those weeds which are most destructive of the precious fruits of peace and good will. By requiring us to love our neighbours and even our enemies, they prove the religion of the Bible to be not only a most inoffensive but a most benevolent institution. By restraining all those unruly passions which tend to disturb the peace of society, and to alienate men from one another, by prohibiting violence and oppression, fraud and treachery, and even slander and

censoriousness, and by enforcing the natural dictates of the human heart in favour of equity and humanity, they provide for the removal of every occasion of offence, and lay a sure foundation for public as well as private tranquillity. Confining our views to this life only, the precepts of the Bible are calculated to render men happy in themselves and useful to others ; they are simple, so as to be easily understood, and the observance of them cannot fail of producing the intended effect ; they deserve, therefore, the character of wisdom ; and the book which contains them should be endeared to us as a repository of moral wisdom. And how much more will it be endeared to us when we consider the tendency of these precepts is to prepare and fit us for a future world. But still limiting our views, and considering it at present only with reference to its moral precepts, have those who agree in acknowledging their authority no common principles ? Can the violation of these admitted precepts be compensated for in the sight of God or man, by any profession of theological opinions ?—or, on the other hand, will not the diligent observance of these precepts render a man useful and consequently respected in Society ? Will they not make him a blessing to those amongst whom he lives ; and prove him to be a *Bible Christian* in practice, with whatever sect he may join in worship ?

Remember, then, Bible Christians, that this book is a repository of practical wisdom, and show your wisdom by diligent observance of its precepts. You may be traduced as enemies of the Bible, may be refused the name of Christians, or have it given you in such a manner as to show the low estimation in which you are held by the self-called Orthodox ; but prove your attachment by your practice, live as Christians, and rest satisfied that the God whom you worship, and the Saviour whom you love and strive to imitate, will not reject you, even should the opinions you have formed and honestly profess, be erroneous.

In every nation, and no doubt also, in every sect, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him.

K.

ON THE DEITY OF CHRIST.

A Writer, signing himself H. in the XIIth Number of "The Orthodox Presbyterian," has occupied six pages, in attempting to prove the "Deity of Christ." Without saying much, at present, whether the doctrine is true or false, I must remark, that H. has assumed every thing and proved nothing. If it be true, it will be found clearly stated in Divine Revelation, the only source from which any religious authority can be admitted by "*The Bible Christian*." He sets out with the following sentences:—"It is an intuitive truth that *He who possesses 'all power' is God*. The Lord Jesus Christ lays claim to all power; and 'the spirit of prophesy' which 'is the testimony of Jesus,' confirms the application of it to him. Therefore Jesus Christ is God."

Every Unitarian believes that Jesus Christ is next in power to God, but he believes that this power is *given* to him. If H., however, can prove that Christ *possesses all power* independently of *his* Father and *our* Father, of *his* God and *our* God, he will overthrow Unitarianism. This he has attempted. His principal proof is taken from Matt. xxviii. 18.—"All power is given unto me in Heaven and in earth." That this quotation may produce the desired effect, he has studiously marked the words *all* and *power* in italics, as often as he cites them, and has passed over the word *given*, leaving it unmarked, as unworthy of notice. I will bring his assumption to the test, by some other points and passages.

It is an intuitive truth, that *he who possesses all knowledge is God*. The primitive Christians possessed all knowledge; therefore, the primitive Christians were Gods. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and *ye know all things*." 1 John, ii. 20. It is not even said that this knowledge was *given*: for it is stated by the Apostle,—*ye have, ye know*,—which, according to H.'s mode of reasoning, is a stronger proof of the *omniscience* of the primitive Christians, than his favourite passage is of the *power* of Christ. The prophets and apostles foretold future events and worked miracles; and H. may endeavour to establish *their* Deity, if he can shew that they were *possessed of all knowledge* to foretel

future scenes, and of *all* power to work wonders. But if their knowledge and power were *given* them, his labour will be useless.

It seems from the New Testament, that the knowledge and power of Christ, though much more extensive than those of the prophets or apostles, had their limits. "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."—Mark, xiii. 32. Matthew records the words of Christ, "but my Father only." "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself."—John v. 19.

I will adduce a quotation to shew the force of the term *all*, on which H. lays so much weight. Paul writes to the Ephesians, iii. 19. "And to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that *ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*" If this passage were written of Christ, H. would have seized upon it as a powerful proof of the doctrine which he has laboured to establish.

H. will surely admit, that Christ knew best himself whether he was *possessed* of all power, or whether it was *given* to him by his Father. In the very verse upon which so much stress has been laid, Christ uses the word *given*, which is shamefully slurred over in "The Orthodox Presbyterian," and used as synonymous with *possessed*. But there are many verses, equally plain, respecting the power of Christ; and, what imparts to them a double influence is, that they were uttered by himself. "To sit on my right hand, and on my left, is *not mine to give*; but it shall be *given* them, for whom it is prepared of my FATHER."—Matt. xx. 23. "I can of *mine own self do nothing*; as I hear I judge, and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine *own will*, but the will of the FATHER which hath sent me."—John v. 30. "For I have not spoken of myself; but the FATHER which sent me, *he gave* me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak."—John xii. 49. "The words that I speak unto you, I speak *not of myself*; but the FATHER that dwelleth in me, HE doeth the works."—John xiv. 10. "God *anointed* Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit and with *power.*"—Acts x. 38. "And the glory which thou *gavest* me I have *given* them, that *they* may be *one*, even as *we* are *one.*"—John xvii. 22. "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God *gave* unto him."—Rev. i. 1.

Christ ascribes his knowledge and power in these passages, and in many others, to his Father who sent him and in no instance lays claim to all power, or says that *he possesses all power* :—all is *given* to him. So that unless there be a departure from the plain meaning of plain terms, H. can produce no passage that will support him in the doctrine he has *assumed*, but which he has evidently failed to make even plausible. The words of Christ are exceedingly artless, and must be clear to every candid mind ; but I lament to observe that H. has put a construction upon them which would be condemned by every man if they were applied to any civil question, and which derogates from the power of the great Father of all, who is the “*giver* of every good and perfect gift;—and who *gave* the spirit without measure to his Son.”

DELTA.

To the Editor of the Bible Christian.

SIR—In the month of May there was an Editorial note in “*The Orthodox Presbyterian*” containing the following sentence—“*Let the Presbyterians of Ulster, then, beware. Unitarianism sets up a man’s opinion in opposition to the Lord Jesus !—pronounces him in error !—calls the miraculous conception a fable !—declares Evangelists to be fools or rogues !—and pronounces Paul a dupe, an impostor, and corrupter of the truth !* And after all this, we hear of the “*Unitarian Association in Dublin,*” and the “*Unitarian Churches of the North !*”

This was stated from the pulpit, in one of the lectures delivered in the First Presbyterian Congregation, Belfast, to be an egregious and wilful falsehood, and a foul calumny, or words to that effect. No person can think that this language is too strong to be applied to such an infamous vilification of the characters of persons of the highest respectability for intelligence, moral conduct, and unswerving adherence to the dictates of conscience in matters of Religion. This statement was known to one or more of the conductors of that periodical; and six months passed without any attempt to substantiate so villainous a charge. In your publication for the month of July, a direct allusion was made to the same assertion, and it

was stated to be a known and wilful falsehood, and to be an example of defamation most atrocious and unprincipled. Still there was no attempt whatever at proving these awful charges, although it now appears that both this public statement and the denouncement in your publication were well known to the Editors.

The reason why it was stated to be a *wilful* falsehood is simply this: The Editors or persons responsible for "The Orthodox Presbyterian," are known, as their names were (I am informed) publicly announced at a meeting of Presbytery in this town. These persons are known to be men who have been long in habits of confidential intimacy with different Unitarian Ministers—some of them under considerable obligations to them—and they know perfectly well that no such opinions as are stated in this notorious paragraph are maintained either by ministers or people. I consider the term wilful perfectly justifiable under these circumstances, and that it is an instance of atrocious and unprincipled defamation, for an individual of this number to pledge himself to the truth of such an assertion, by affixing his Editorial mark. At the end of *six months* an article appears, consisting of some remarks made by another writer, on the opinions of Dr. Priestley, and the conclusion of it repeats the statement already quoted, and triumphantly refers to the extracts from Dr. Priestley, in justification of what they say.

Now, supposing all that is inferred from these extracts to be true with respect to Dr. Priestley—can the Editor think that he will hoodwink an intelligent public into the notion that the opinions entertained by an individual, who was in a continual process of change with respect to his sentiments on most subjects, are the inviolable standard or creed of Unitarianism. He knows that the sentiments of this individual have been refuted by Unitarians both here and in England, and that in the Belfast Edition of Price's Sermons this dissent is expressly stated. Here then is some individual, out of several who have been on terms of intimacy with professed Unitarians in this country, who have partaken of the Lord's Supper with them—who have known them in their own congregations—who live in a town where they are neither few in number, nor ashamed or afraid to state their sentiments—and this individual charges this

body with "setting up a man's opinion in opposition to the Lord Jesus, &c. &c." To say nothing of the mutual forbearance, and of the cautiousness in pronouncing judgment which the Gospel requires, and which perhaps neither of any two contending theological parties have ever adhered to, as scrupulously as they ought—is it not a flagrant violation of every just principle of evidence or of argument, to overlook the authentic publications of a religious community, and make them responsible for the opinions of a man whose controversial writings are hardly known in this country—draw conclusions *which such writings do not warrant*, and affix them as a stigma upon a body of Christians whose respectability in the different walks of life they dare not dispute. There is one point on which "The Orthodox Presbyterian" and we are agreed, that whatever tends to the growth of Deism or Atheism must be false; and we have but one objection to enter with them into a discussion of the comparative tendency of the two systems in this respect, which is, that we fear we can show objections of such magnitude and power against the whole of Revelation, from the principles of Calvinism, and more particularly from the doctrine of the "Universality of Scriptural inspiration," or that the Bible is divine in every word—that we fear would force men to Atheism before they could be rescued from its gulph by true and rational views of the Christian Doctrine. In the first number of the second volume of "The Orthodox Presbyterian," the Editor expresses "a longing for leisure from Polemical Divinity;"—the second number proves that he has no lack of appetite for vile aspersions upon the character and principles of those who refuse the yoke of bondage to his religious creed.

V. D. M.

Nov. 25. 1830.

*Extract from the Discourses of Robert Robinson,
Baptist Minister of Cambridge.*

“Collect all the truths we have laid down into one point. We said there was such a thing as natural justice—a sense of right and wrong; that all mankind have done wrong, and are in a state of injustice; that God sees and knows, abhors and must punish injustice; that the present life is not a state of punishment, and that the wicked are punished in a future state; that some who have been guilty of many crimes yet escape punishment, and are made happy in Heaven; and that this forgiveness is effected through the great love of God and through the death of Christ. This is the substance of what we have been saying. If some deny this truth, if others perplex it, and if others abuse it, we are sorry for such things; but let God be true, but every man a liar.”—page 164.

A Summary of the leading statements made by Dr. Carpenter, of Bristol, in his Lectures on the Atonement.

1. All the blessings of the Gospel, and all the means through which they were effectually communicated and diffused, originated in the Free Grace, the Love, nay ‘the Tender Mercy of our God,’ Jehovah, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: HIS mercy prompted, HIS wisdom devised, and HIS power effected, the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus: in short, Christ and his salvation were the *effect*, and in no way the *cause*, of the Father’s pardoning grace towards mankind.

2. Christ Jesus was the *medium* of all the gracious communications of Divine Mercy made by the Gospel; he was the Agent of his God and Father in executing the purposes of HIS Grace; and in order to execute them, (influenced by the most consummate piety and obedience to God, and by the purest love to men,) he voluntarily submitted to the painful and ignominious death of the cross, and thereby became the ‘Author of an eternal salvation to ALL who obey him.’

3. The blessings we have by the Gospel, are (in brief) as follow. (1.) A clear knowledge of the character, dealings, and purposes of God, considered not only as the Sovereign Ruler and Righteous Judge of his creatures, but as their Father, their Friend, and their Benefactor. (2.) The certain disclosure, by HIS express authority, of a Resurrection from the dead, and a life to come; a state of righteous retribution,—of dreadful woe to the impenitent and disobedient,—of holy bliss to the penitent, sincere, and faithful; and this according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil. (3.) The assurance, on the express authority of God himself, of His mercy to the truly penitent who forsake their evil ways and turn unto the Lord with full purpose of heart,—the assurance of the remission of sins on repentance. (4.) Plain and profitable directions in the way of duty, showing with certainty (by precepts and by example) what is the will of God; what dispositions and what external conduct will be acceptable to HIM; and what are offensive in HIS sight. (5.) The promise to those who faithfully seek his favour, of all needful aid and support in the trials and duties of life; and the confident assurance that all things shall work together for their good.

4. All these inestimable blessings (with especial reference to the forgiveness of sins) constitute together the *Redemption that is in Christ Jesus*,—the means of deliverance from the power and punishment of sin, and the fear of death. And all these we have ‘through his blood,’ through his death. We can possess them (as we now do) on divine promise, only by faith in him; and if this faith becomes a vital principle of the heart, regulating the life, it is a faith unto salvation.

5. Since we should not have possessed the blessed and sanctifying promises and guidance of the Gospel, but by his death,—since his death, though on his own part perfectly voluntary, was (by the appointment of infinite wisdom) necessary to convey, assure, and diffuse them to mankind,—we owe the possession of Gospel privileges to his death; and whatever influence they have upon us, in delivering us from the bondage of sin and death, and making us fit objects of God’s pardoning mercy and final acceptance, may be justly ascribed to his

death. His blood ratified the new covenant, and was shed for the remission of sins ; and he gave up his life as a ransom, or means of spiritual deliverance.

6. These *facts*,—taken in connexion with the peculiar features of the Jewish dispensation, (its ritual and sacrifices, and its exclusive privileges,) with the language of the old Testament respecting the temporal deliverance by the hand of Moses, and with the circumstances of the Gentiles at the time of Christ,—furnish an adequate explanation of all the language of the New Testament respecting the death of Christ. The substance of the whole is, that ‘in him we have redemption **THROUGH** his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.’

7. The death of Christ has its efficacy in producing the believer’s pardon and acceptance, only by the influence of his work and gospel. God does not pardon the sins of the believer *for the sake of* Christ ; but, for his own mercy’s sake, and in consequence of the repentance and righteousness which are wrought by faith in Christ, that is in the divine authority of his work and message. —*Eph. iv. 32.* is the only place in the Common Translation where God is represented as pardoning sins for the sake of Christ ; and this should have been rendered ‘as God, in (or by) Christ, hath forgiven you.’ ‘Christ Jesus’ is ‘the *Mediator* between God and men,’ because he was the Minister and Messenger of God’s grace to mankind : he is our *Propitiation*, because he conveyed us the offers of pardoning mercy, and died to assure them to us : and by him we have the *Atonement* (*At-one-ment*), since by the influence of his work and gospel the believer is brought into a state of acceptance with God. The word *Atonement* occurs once only in reference to Christ, *viz. Rom. v. 11.*, and there should have been rendered *Reconciliation*, as in *2 Cor. v. 19.* The Gospel of Christ is the *Atonement* or *Reconciliation*, because it turns men from darkness to light and from the power of sin unto God, so that they may receive forgiveness here and an eternal inheritance hereafter.

8. Whatever is inconsistent with No. 1. must be false. We are therefore certain that the death of Christ did not make God merciful, did not appease his wrath, did not *dispose* him to forgive.

9. The *theories* of philosophers and divines on this sub-

ject are worth nothing. No effect can be justly ascribed to the death of Christ, which is not *declared* in the Scriptures. It is no where declared that the death of Christ satisfied the Law or the Justice of God ; that God could not forgive sins without a satisfaction. It is no where declared that the punishment of sin must fall some where ; and that an innocent person might undergo it as a substitution for the guilty, and the guilty escape. But it is declared that God will abundantly pardon the wicked who forsake their evil way and turn unto the Lord ; and the honour of God's law requires that its offers of mercy should be fulfilled as well as its threatenings of punishment.

10. In fine, we have abundant cause to cherish lively, grateful love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to glory in his cross, since through it we have all the blessings of the Gospel : but God even the Father is the Sole Original Source of them ; and to HIM be supreme gratitude, love, and obedience.

S. S.

Intelligence.

CASE OF LORD TEMPLETON AND THE REV. ROBERT CAMPBELL.

We regret that we are obliged to postpone, until our next, the publication of the Rev. H. Montgomery's Letter to Lord Viscount Templeton, upon the subject of his Lordship's treatment of Mr. Campbell. The case of Grey-Abbey is still fresh in the public mind ; and we pledge ourselves that Templepatrick will not create less astonishment and indignation. In the mean time, we may just state, that Mr. Campbell is on the very eve of being ejected from the Congregational Farm, without the smallest compensation for all his valuable improvements, and without having a shelter for his family in the midst of winter, *solely and avowedly* because Lord Templeton will not permit a *Unitarian Minister* to reside upon his estate. Most of his Lordship's tenants have no leases ; and several of them, through terror of being likewise ejected, have resigned their seats in Mr. Campbell's Meeting-house, and now attend Calvinistic worship, on the Sabbath, *in one of his Lordship's barns*. On the

31st of the last month, no fewer than *ten families*, his Lordship's tenants, gave up their seats. The causes of these things, with the conduct of certain clerical abettors and apologists of his Lordship, will be fully exposed.

ROGER HALL, Esq. of Narrow-Water, is also endeavouring to obtain celebrity, by serving the Rev. Samuel Arnold and the congregation of Warrenpoint, with notice of ejection. A portion of the Meeting-house Green, he has already taken from them by process of Law. Should he persevere, he shall not be forgotten.

These virtuous Remonstrant Ministers and their flocks may rest assured not only of sympathy but support in the maintenance of their integrity. There is a *Fund* in progress for *The Protection of the Rights of Conscience*; and there are still, in this country, abundance of kind hearts and liberal hands to support the persecuted and oppressed.

Christian Worship: a Discourse, from Luke xi. 1. delivered in the Unitarian Chapel, Glasgow, on Sunday, October 10th, 1830. By GEORGE HARRIS.

"I like not this prayer, O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity. It savours of barbarity. The word Trinity is barbarous, insipid, profane—a human invention, grounded on no testimony of God's Word—the Popish God, unknown to Jesus Christ and the Apostles."—JOHN CALVIN.

"The word Trinity sounds oddly, and is a human invention. It were better to call Almighty God—God,—than Trinity."—MARTIN LUTHER.

This is a very beautiful and convincing Sermon. It clearly demonstrates, on the irrefragable authority of Scripture, that *the Father* is the sole object of worship. We cordially recommend it to the Christian Public; and if some of our brethren, who weekly worship *the Son* and the *The Holy Spirit*, would give it a serious perusal, we firmly believe they might be induced, henceforth, to confine their adoration to "*The One only living and true God.*" Mr. Harris is a gentleman equally distinguished for his eloquence and his zeal. Though we differ from him on certain points of doctrine, we cordially unite with him in maintaining the fundamental principle of Christianity—the *unity of God*—and we honour the intrepid devotedness with which, almost

single-handed, he has assailed the confederated hosts of error in Scotland. By the aid of "The Christian Pioneer," of which he is Editor, his extraordinary pulpit eloquence, and his unabating toil, he has eminently contributed to the growth of Unitarianism, in a most ungenial soil. His opinions are rapidly spreading in various parts of North Britain; and the fact, that the Sermon which we are now noticing has passed through *five* large editions in little more than a month, amply proves that the spirit of inquiry is alive and vigorous, in the favourite realm of Calvinism. This Discourse was written in consequence of an Orthodox Minister refusing to attend a Funeral, because Mr. Harris was to perform the usual burial service! He first rebuked the intolerant Pharisee, in a letter, which, in a few weeks, passed through *ten* or *twelve* editions; and he has now rendered additional service to the world, by this clear exposition of the true object of worship. We tender him our hearty congratulations on the triumphant manner in which he has exposed the unchristian bigotry of self-named Orthodoxy.

UNITARIANISM IN AMERICA.

We have just received a collection of Papers, relative to the transactions of the Society of Friends, in America; and we feel pleasure in giving publicity to a few facts, which must be cheering to the friends of genuine Christianity in this country. We find that the large and respectable population of Friends in Pennsylvania, New-York, New Jersey, Delaware, the eastern coast of Maryland, &c. has been recently agitated by a controversy, corresponding, in many respects, with that which has lately rent the Synod of Ulster. The results of the American controversy are of the most triumphant kind. It has been ascertained that *fully nine-tenths of the Society of Friends are Unitarians*. Orthodoxy had, for a time, assumed the reins in this hitherto peaceful community; and a few leaders were attempting, as in the North of Ireland, to establish a lasting tyranny over their brethren, by their imposition of *creeds* and *tests*; but the great body of this intellectual people, duly appreciating their religious liberty, rose simultaneously, and bore testimony to the sentiments of Penn and the early professors of their name;—"We will have *no creeds*," said they;—"We never assumed to ourselves a *faith-forming* or *worship-making* power;—"We hold the Scriptures as a *sufficient* rule of faith and practice, under the application of the Spirit of Grace;—"We hold the fundamental principle of Christianity to be, the knowledge of the true God, *not as divided, but as one, pure, entire, and Eternal Being*; who, in the fulness of time, sent forth his Son as the light which enlighteneth every man."

In consequence of the open avowal of liberal Christian sentiment, on the part of those who adhered to primitive principles, the work of disownment and of dispossession commenced. The Orthodox leaders, after denouncing the opinions of their opponents as "*soul-destroying heresy*," proceeded formally to disown the "*heretics*," and to forbid all *Friendly* intercommunion. The Orthodox did not stop here: It is well known that genuine Quakers do not wish to engage in legal contests; and presuming on their pacific character, it has sometimes happened that two or three Orthodox members, conceiving themselves to be in possession of the true faith, have, by a kind of right that has been long understood among the Hierarchs of this world, laid claim to the common funds of whole meetings,—thus adding secular injustice to religious assumption. It is satisfactory, however, to state, that, notwithstanding a persecution, unprecedented in the history of this body, primitive Society has, in most cases, been re-established in the peaceful and free exercise of a philanthropic religion.

Such circumstances as these, taken in connexion with the progress of Unitarianism in the New England States, and with the late indignant refusal of the American Government, to establish Orthodoxy as the religion of the State, (!!!) mark the rapid decline of Trinitarianism in the New World.

Subscribers.

Our Subscribers are aware that the first volume of THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN will close with our next number; and that it is necessary the *Publisher* should ascertain, on or before the 1st of January, 1831, how many copies will be required at the commencement of the second volume. We return our best thanks to our friends for their liberal support, and promise ourselves the pleasure of addressing them at greater length in our next number.

Correspondents.

The letter of Discipulus, wishing to know the opinion of the BIBLE CHRISTIAN, as to *this life being a state of probation*, fell aside shortly after its receipt, and was not found until the present number was nearly all in type; but it shall not be forgotten.

The communication of our respected correspondent, Q, came too late for this month.

Philaethes has written at such length, that his excellent article, if inserted, must be subdivided; and, as we are anxious to have it complete in the same volume, we are under the necessity of delaying the final consideration of it until the beginning of our second year.

Gamma, on the various English Translations of the Scriptures is under consideration.

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VOL. I.

A REVIEW OF SOME MODERN SYNODS.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 509.)

CONCLUSION.

THE reader may now think it high time to put an end to this long series; I shall, accordingly, hasten to a close. The dissensions at Exeter, and the turbulent Synod at Salters' Hall in 1719, were recently exposed in the *Christian Moderator*.† In the same Publication may be found an ample detail of the disputes and divisions of the General Synod of Ulster, with an account of that Body from its origin. Of these the public have already heard too much; and of the Seceding Synod, who have usurped the title of the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland, there is nothing worth recording. The history of the Synod of Munster, formerly called the Southern Association, has also received the notice due to that liberal and enlightened Assembly. I may, therefore, be excused from entering upon any further detail on these subjects.

A Review of the General Assembly of Scotland would comprise a history of that country, civil and ecclesiastical. I shall, therefore, confine myself to one point, of some curiosity and interest—the progress of Presbyterianism, and the steps by which it attained to a more systematic form there than in any other part of Europe.

The Parliament of 1560 directed the Reformed Ministers to present a Confession of Faith in the room of the Genevan Confession, which alone was then in use, and to bring back the discipline of the Church to the primitive model. Accordingly, the first *General Assembly* was convened in the same year. It consisted of

† A few Copies of this Periodical may still be had at S. Archer's, High-street, Belfast.

12 Ministers and 32 Ruling Elders, who presented a form for the election of *Superintendants*, Ministers, Elders, and *Deacons*; and appointed a Committee to draw up a form of Church Government. The office of Superintendent was a modification of Diocesan Episcopacy, after the Lutheran practice; but their lives and professional character were subject to be tried by every assembly. Agreeably to this, an ecclesiastical commission was appointed, with full powers to rectify abuses of whatever kind. The Superintendants were also restricted from censorial jurisdiction, without the consent of the nearest discreet Ministers, and subject to an appeal to the Assembly. This seems to have been the commencement of Presbyterian Government.

The next step was to establish *Provincial Synods*, and require them to send deputies to the Assembly; the *Ministers and Commissioners* of shires to be chosen by the Synods, and those for Burghs by the Council and Kirk Session of the place. These Synods were to meet twice in the year, and decide all questions, except such as required the interference of the Assembly.

In 1581, King James proposed that the 924 Parishes should be reduced to 600, and these classed into 50 Presbyteries. This was gladly complied with, and soon after 48 Presbyteries were formed, and the Assembly consisted of 400 Ministers. In the reign of King William, the constitution of the Assembly was fixed as follows: two Ministers and one ruling Elder from Presbyteries of 18 Ministers and under; four Ministers and two Elders from Presbyteries not exceeding 24; and so on proportionally; none to be admitted Members except Ministers and ruling Elders. This plan of delegation was more than once under consideration in the Synod of Ulster.

In 1719, the Assembly enjoined every Minister to take care to have *Deacons* as well as ruling Elders in his congregation.

As the Assembly recognised the authority of the Magistrate to summon and preside in Assemblies of the Clergy, the King appoints a Commissioner to represent him, who dissolves the Assembly in his name; but as they do not acknowledge his power of dismissing them, the Moderator adjourns them in the name of the church. A proposal of this kind made part of the first outline of

the arrangement of the Irish Regium Donum, in 1803, and was submitted to the consideration of some Ministers ; but was disapproved by them, and not afterwards renewed. It ran in these terms : “ It is proposed, That a King’s Commissioner shall sit in the Meetings of the General Synod of Ulster, in the same manner as in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland : the Commissioner to be a Presbyterian.” The consequence of such an appointment, had it taken place, would now be a curious subject of speculation. Before they break up, they appoint the Commission of the Assembly, empowered to act further during the recess ; similar to the Synod’s fixed Committee, but invested with much ampler powers.

METHODIST CONFERENCE.

There has arisen, within the memory of many now living, an Ecclesiastical Body of greater influence and more substantial Power than were possessed by any of those, which have passed in Review. The *Conference* of Methodist Ministers is neither sanctioned by the Civil Magistrate nor supported by Episcopal or Presbyterian authority. The Members are all Ministers without any intermixture of Laity ; and these Ministers pretend neither to Apostolical succession, nor any known forms and supposed gifts of Ordination. In default of all these it exercises a more extensive and absolute dominion than any other religious assembly does now or ever did. It is computed, that the number of Methodists in Great Britain, Ireland, and America, including several seceding branches, can hardly be less than one million of souls. Of this number the English Conference have under their direction about 380,000. These are all in *Society*, in the enjoyment of Religious Privileges.—Over these there are Class Leaders, Local Preachers, Itinerant Preachers, Superintendants, and the *Conference*. It is supposed that the regular Members of the Methodist Body do not exceed one-third of the audiences, that attend their public services ; and it is conjectured, that taking in children and servants, there may be about two millions under the influence of the English Conference. This influence extends to their Domestic and Civil, their Religious and Political con-

cerns. The number of Methodist Preachers throughout the world are 2801. Of these 1016 are under the direction of the English Conference. It is calculated that thrice that number are engaged as Local Preachers ; and, of course, that 4000 persons are employed in extending the influence of the Conference. There is reason to suppose that the average amount of the salaries of Methodist Preachers is about £200 ; and the total paid to those in connexion with that Body £200,000 per annum. The Conference is also the sole owner of all the chapels throughout the kingdom, with schools and academies and the Patronage annexed to them. It has also the distribution of monies raised for charitable purposes, Sunday Schools, and the support of superannuated Ministers.

The Conference have all legal power in their own hands ; and admit as many more of the remaining Preachers as they think fit to be present at their Meetings. Some ambitious persons are said to rule the rest, as in certain Presbyterian Synods, and through them the whole of the connexion. There is not one Representative of the people in the Conference. The Priesthood is the supreme and only power ; and each District, and each Circuit has a ghostly leader, subject to them, and supreme in his sphere. Disobedience is punished by excommunication—a formidable sentence, fatal alike to their religious privileges and their temporal interest.

They require the same slavish submission to the ruling powers in the state, which they demand for themselves. "Methodism," they say, "is as far removed from democracy as from sin." "A principle uniformly *avoided* in Methodism, is, that all power is derived from the people." "None of us shall, in writing or conversation, speak lightly or irreverently of the Government under which he lives. We are to observe, that the oracles of God command us to be subject to the higher powers, and that honour to the King is thus connected with the fear of God." "Let us daily pray for our rulers, and submit ourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." Liberal principles, however, are gaining ground in the minds of many. Hundreds have seceded and thousands are prepared to leave the house of bondage.

As to Doctrine, they require a singular profession from Ministers : *Belief in the Eight Volumes of Mr.*

Wesley's Sermons, and his Notes on the New Testament. But many of the Preachers are tired of the dull round of Wesley's Sermons. Wesley and his followers were Arminians, and Methodism has done much good service against the monstrous doctrines of Calvin.

This great fabric was raised by John Wesley, a man of parts and learning, enthusiasm and self-confidence, qualities calculated to inspire his ignorant and lowly disciples with respect and implicit obedience. He collected a family of devotees within the bosom of the Church of England, addicted rather to feeling than Faith, Devotion than Doctrine. He was a high Churchman; and endeavoured to obtain assistants among the Episcopal Clergy. Failing in this, he, at length, and with great difficulty, brought himself to authorize uneducated and unordained men to preach the Gospel. He assumed the office of a Bishop, and ordained, with Episcopal Ordination, three preachers for America and three for Scotland.

He next became sole proprietor of all the Chapels built during his lifetime. This he was enabled to do by the ignorance and poverty of his early converts. On his death, in 1791, the power, which thus accrued to him, he left, with all his other claims on the Methodist Body, to one hundred persons, whom he constituted the *Conference*. These soon broke into parties; and, in the event, some aspiring young men of superior endowments gained the ascendancy. They then proceeded to restrict the power of Ordination to persons approved by themselves. They had hitherto disclaimed any pretensions to the name of a separate Church or sect; hoping, as some allege, to be received into the Established Church, and in consequence abstained from administering Baptism and the Lord's Supper: but the people now became clamorous for these ceremonies, for the bulk of them had no desire for a comprehension in the Church. At last they assembled in great numbers at Bristol, at the same time with the Conference, and demanded their rights. The Preachers were alarmed. They say themselves: "We trembled at the thought of a division, and determined to set apart a day for solemn and *real* fasting and prayer. God was indeed in the midst of us." This occurred in 1796. A similar Meeting assembled at Leeds in the following year, and extorted from the

Conference some further concessions. A demand was made for the admission of delegates from the People, but it was refused. On other occasions, they pretended to decide by lot, which they affected to consider as the voice of God.

I pass over the long series of tyrannical proceedings and reluctant concessions of this Body; as, also, the severe reflections, both from within and without, which their conduct has called forth. I shall only say that they partook of all the bad qualities, for which such associations have been justly condemned.

Wesley and his Methodists have been compared to Ignatius Loyola and his jesuits; and Bishop Lavington has instituted a general comparison between the *enthusiasm of the Papists and Methodists*. In their earlier days, however, they were a very valuable Body of Religionists, and arose, very opportunely, to revive a spirit of piety. They supplied the deficiencies of the regular clergy, penetrated into cellars and garrets, coal pits and mines, and excited a spirit of devotion among their ignorant and depraved inhabitants. This influence is greatly diminished by the prevalence of a more irrational and pernicious fanaticism. The Evangelical Clergy, aided by Calvinistic zealots of various sects, threaten to overthrow their power. They are said too to be losing their hold on the people, by the pomp, splendour, and dignity which they affect, at least in England; and, in consequence, to depend for their influence on the zeal of local preachers, and the instrumentality of the laity, by discouraging field preaching, and other practices, by which they rose to consequence. Itinerancy is on the decline; and their annual changes have been exchanged for triennial, and sometimes for a longer residence.

Finally, on a retrospect of the Synodical assemblies, reviewed in these papers, the free and enlightened Dissenter will rejoice in his liberty, and glory in his emancipation from their bonds. According to his temper he will pity or despise the multitudes, who are content to walk in their trammels; and will feel ashamed or indignant, that the great ends of the Reformation should be frustrated, and its blooming hopes blasted by these tyrannical combinations, for they all participate in the same character. Whether they be convened by a con-

cert of Sovereigns, as the Synod of Dort, or by the Long Parliament, like the Assembly of Divines; whether they be composed of the Hierarchy, Dignitaries, and learned Clergy of England, in convocation, or collected from the lowest orders of society, as the Methodists; whether they form a National Church, invested with legal authority, like the General Assembly of Scotland, or dictate to a sect like the two Northern Synods in Ireland; whether, like these, they include a representative body of lay Elders, or be constituted of Ministers, like the Conference; they are all hostile to the progress of truth and liberty, all tenacious of arbitrary power over conscience and antiquated error. The predominant features in their character are bigotry and tyranny, fanaticism and hypocrisy, dissension and division among themselves, and intolerance to others; base intrigues and pious frauds.

Of all these, except the Methodists, the Synod of Ulster and the Secession Synod are by far the most deficient in learning and talent; yet they presume, and are permitted to rule over 300 Churches in this intelligent Province,

ERASMUS.

SCRIPTURE ITS OWN INTERPRETER.

(CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 518.)

THE following is a list of the principal prophetic intimations of the nature and dignity of the Messiah from the Old Testament, as far as we have the authority of the writers of the New Testament for applying them to our Saviour.

There are other passages considered to be prophetic which we cannot adduce in proof of any particular view of the person of Christ, because we have not the same certainty of their being applicable. I do not enter into the difficult questions that have been started concerning prophecy, nor do I take upon me to determine what should be brought forward as really prophetic, and what are to be looked upon as being only accommodations, or apposite passages in the Old Testament, adduced in illustration of their subject; nor yet do I decide anything about what is called the double sense of prophecy—one more immediately applying to some historical

event that took place soon after, and another more remote, presignifying some part of our Lord's history.

A discussion of all these points would take up too much room, and require a reference to original authorities and to the opinions of learned men, with frequent quotations from the dead languages and verbal criticisms upon Hebrew and Greek words, that would be very uninteresting to most of your readers. But to show that whatever opinion on these points an individual may entertain, he is not to be branded as holding merely because it suits best with his other views of the Christian doctrine; nor to be slandered, as is commonly done, as denying, corrupting, or explaining away the declarations of Scripture: I will quote a passage from perhaps, and deservedly too, the very highest modern authority of the Calvinists in England, Dr. John Pye Smith, of Homerton. He says, that "the citations from the Old Testament [in the New] are rather of the nature of *classical passages*, capable of a *descriptive application* to the events than *direct prophecies*. Such applications, he says, have been always common, not only among the Jews, but with every nation possessing any literature." And again, with respect to the argument drawn from the name Emmanuel, quoted from Isaiah, vii. 14, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel." He observes, "It appears to me," says he, "that the passage can be proved to be a prophecy of the Messiah *in no other than a remote or typical sense*, and that *no argument can be drawn from the words or context* capable of determining whether Emmanuel was designed to be a descriptive title, and therefore declaratory of the union of the Divine nature with the human, or a commemorative name to express and celebrate the fact of the Divine interposition for the salvation of mankind." His opinion seems to be, that it may be applied as descriptive after the doctrine has been proved from other sources; but that it can never be made an independent argument. In another passage of his work he states very explicitly, that "it seems to be as clear as words can make it, that the *Son promised was born within a year after the giving of the prediction*; that his being so born at the assigned period was the "sign," or pledge that the political deliverance announced to Ahaz should

certainly take place ; and that such deliverance would arrive before this child should have reached the age in which children are commonly able to discriminate the kinds of food." He says again, " This passage comes under the class of *prophetic testimonies* which had a *primary*, but *inferior* and *partial* reference to some *proximate* person or event, but had another and a **DESIGNED** reference to some remoter circumstance, which, when it occurred, would be the *real fulfilment*, answering every feature, and **FILLING UP** the entire extent of the original delineation." He also admits that *the Virgin* was the *Queen of Ahaz*, and *the Son, Hezekiah*, who, of course, was to be called Immanuel.

Bishop Kidder, in his *Demonstration of the Messias*, says—" It is to be considered that a Scripture may be said to be fulfilled several ways: v. g. *properly*, in the letter, as when that which was foretold comes to pass ; or, again, when what was fulfilled in the Type is fulfilled again in the Anti-type. Or else a Scripture may be said to be fulfilled more *improperly* : v. g. by way of *accommodation*, as when a like event happens to any place or people, to what fell out some time before." . . He must be a stranger to the Hebrew writers that does not know that nothing is more common among them than such accommodations of the Text upon all occasions.

Bishop Horn, too, in his commentary upon the Psalms, contends for the double meaning of prophesy ; and Thos. H. Horne, in his excellent *Introduction to the Knowledge of the Scriptures*, (vol. ii. p. 705, &c.) is strenuous on the same side. He admits, too, that " the 45th Psalm is in the original a song of loves, an Epithalamium on the nuptials of King Solomon with the King of Egypt's daughter ; but, (continues he,) from Heb. i. 8. we are assured that it is addressed to Christ ; and, therefore, in a remote and spiritual sense, it celebrates the majesty and glory of his kingdom ; his mystical union with his Church, and the admirable benefits that would be conferred upon her in the times of the Gospel."† I note this because Mr. Carlisle, in his profun-

† It must be obvious that if the expression " Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," could be applied in any sense to Solomon, it must be impossible to show that the very same expression applied to Christ, proves him to be the Lord God Almighty.

dity, seems to attribute this application of the Psalm to Dr. Drummond, as his invention. Moreover this same Mr. Carlisle has added to the other symptoms of a heretical spirit, that are enough to subject him to the inquisition of the "Theological Committee," an admission that "many of these prophecies had a reference to a fulfilment, primary in point of time, to the great and ultimate fulfilment."

I give these quotations for the sake of the valuable theological information contained, and not from being under any necessity of using either hypothesis, for the great purpose for which the following list is adduced: viz.—to show that the Prophets in their anticipations of the Messiah, and in their representations of what he was prior to his sojourning upon earth, give no hint that he was to unfold a perfectly new doctrine with regard to the Divine Being, but represent him as in *his pre-existent state* inferior to the Father—subordinate to him—sent by him—doing his will—executing his great work of love and mercy to the children of men—and receiving from him that dominion which was to be everlasting, and that kingdom which was not to be destroyed.

For the sake of convenience, I have taken the list from a Calvinistic writer, and have only alleged one prophecy that does not seem to be referred to in the New Testament—Dan. ix. 24. &c. The reason of which exception is, that the name "Messiah" occurs in it with such definite marks of time and other circumstances, as to fix to a certainty its application, independent of all reference to it by any other writer. To prevent misconception, I would add, that I believe many other passages to be equally prophetic with some that have been cited; but they cannot be as authoritatively pronounced upon as those that are identified by the inspired writers.

DEUT. xviii. 15.—"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, *like unto me*;—unto him ye shall hearken.

—18.—"I [the Lord] will raise them up a prophet *like unto thee*, and will put my words into his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that *I shall command him*."—19.—"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken to my words, which *he shall speak in my name*, I will require it of him."—Compare with Acts, vii. 37.

PSALMS, ii. 7.—"I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."—Compare with Acts, xiii. 33, Heb. v. 5.

PSAL. xvi. 9, 18.—“Therefore my heart is glad; and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.—For *thou* wilt not leave *my soul* in hell, neither wilt thou suffer *thine Holy one* to see corruption.”—Compare Acts ii. 26, 27, 31, xiii. 35, 36, 37.

—xl. 6, 7, 8.—“Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened; burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo I come: in the volume of thy book it is written of me, *I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea thy law is written in my heart.*”—Compare Heb. x. 5, &c.

—xlv. 6, 7.—“Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness: therefore God, *thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*”—Compare with Heb. i. 8, 9. See page 545, l. 30, &c.

—cx. 1.—“The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”—Compare Matt. xxii. 42, &c.

—4.—“The Lord hath sworn, *Thou art a priest for ever*, after the order of Melchisedek.”—Compare Heb. vii. 17.

ISAIAH, vi. 9, 10.—“And he said, go and tell this people, Hear ye, indeed, but understand not: and see ye, indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.”—Compare John xii. 39, 40, 41, and see some remarks on the use that has been made of this passage, in “The Bible Christian,” for September, page 357.

—vii. 14.—“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”—Compare Matt. i. 23. See page 544, l. 22, &c.

—xi. 1.—“And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots, &c. &c.”—Compare Acts xiii. 22, 23. Rom. xv. 12. The whole of Chap. liii. compared with Matthew xxvi. and the other accounts of the last scenes of our Saviour’s life.

ISAIAH, lxi. 1, 2.—“The Spirit of *the Lord God* is upon me, because the Lord hath *anointed* me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath *sent me* to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”—Compare Luke iv. 18, 19.

EZEK. xxxiv. 23.—“And I will set up *one shepherd* over them, and he shall feed them, even *my servant David*; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.”—Compare John, x. 16.

DAN. vii. 13, 14.—“I saw in the night visions, and behold one *like the Son of Man* came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the *Ancient of days*, and they brought him near before him; and there was *given him* dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”—Compare Matt. xxiv. 30, xxviii. 18. John, v. 27, Rev. xiv. 14.

DAN. ix. 24, 25, 26.—“ Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy Holy City, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness; and to seal up the vision and prophesy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the *Messiah the Prince*, shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times: and, after three score and two weeks, shall Messiah be cut off; but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war, desolations are determined.

MICAH, v. 2.—“ But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth to me that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”—Compare Matt. ii. 6.

HAGGAI, ii. 7.—“ And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts.”

—— ix. 9.—“ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold *thy King* cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.”—Compare Matthew xxi. 5.

—— xii. 10.—“ And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his first born.”—Compare John xix. 37.

MAL. iii. 1.—“ Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple. *Even the messenger of the Covenant* whom ye delight in: behold *he* shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.”—Compare Matt. xi. 10.

If I be asked why I did not cite Isaiah, ix. 6, 7, “ For unto us a child is born,” &c. I answer that I was obliged to omit it, because I do not find it appealed to in any part of the New Testament; and, for the same reason, I omit Hag. ii. 7. But is it not prophetic of our Saviour? I *think* it is so, but we have no warrant of Scripture for affirming it positively. Nor is it a little extraordinary, that Matthew quotes the beginning of the chapter, and never adduces these remarkable words. But if it be a prophecy of Christ, and not of Hezekiah, as some believe, does it clearly state his supreme Deity? By no means. The person promised—is spoken of as *born, given*—as having the government imposed upon him—as the successor of David, to whose government

there shall be no end: and at the close it is said, "The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this." But is he not called "the mighty God." If we have our Saviour's authority for saying that those to whom the word of God came were called Gods in the Old Testament, without the blasphemy of supposing them to be the Almighty—why may not he, in particular, to whom so much power is promised, even an everlasting dominion, be called God, which according to Mr. Carlisle "may be compared to the word *king*: a title descriptive of the rank, power, office, &c. of the person who bears it:" and, according to Sir I. Newton, (who, however, now-a-days, is not nearly so high authority as the Rev. Jas. Carlisle) "God is a relative word and has a reference to servants and deity in the Government or dominion of God, not over a body of his own, but over servants." But is he not called "THE mighty God?" *He is not:* The article "*the*" is not in the original. He is called "mighty, God," and so far from thinking this to prove his supreme Deity or identity with the Lord God Almighty, I would not rest upon it my argument against the Humanitarians for the pre-existence of our Lord. In fact there is nothing to prevent this term "mighty God" from being applied, in the phraseology of the Old Testament, to a temporal prince—just as "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," was primarily applied to Solomon, and is therefore inapplicable as a proof even of the pre-existence of Christ. But there is another difficulty in this passage. The same person that is called the mighty God is also to be named the "Everlasting Father." Is Christ then the Everlasting Father? Surely there is no Christian sect will maintain this. How do they avoid the conclusion? By asserting that the translation is wrong; and we have no objection to their resorting to this, except that they never allow us to avail ourselves of a correcter translation in any passage that would be conclusive against their view. Let them take their exception then in the translation "Everlasting Father," provided they will allow us to correct all other passages that we can show as clearly to have been mistranslated.

On some of these points I could enlarge, but I do not wish to occupy more of the concluding number of your volume. You may safely challenge comparison

with the 1st volume of your fellow labourer in the same cause, "The Orthodox Presbyterian," either in quantity or in quality—in the spirit of your publication, or in the illustrations of important passages of Scripture which your pages contain. I call "The Orthodox Presbyterian" your fellow labourer—for, by the paucity of its appeals to Scripture, and its abandonment of passages that it undertook to explain, but which proved too strong for the gainsayers, it is as useful by showing the weakness of *their* cause, as "The Bible Christian" is by proving the strength of *yours*.

EREUNETES.

ON THE PRINCIPAL ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF THE SCRIPTURES.

THE OLD TESTAMENT was written in Hebrew at remote and different periods, commencing with the Books of Moses, about 1500 years before the birth of Christ, and ending with Malachi, 400 years previously to that important event. It was translated into Greek, now denominated the Septuagint Bible, for the accommodation of the Alexandrian Jews, nearly 300 years before that time, and is at present disseminated in a variety of languages.

THE NEW TESTAMENT was written in Greek since the birth of Christ;—some Books nearly 40 years, and others above 60 after that æra. It also is disseminated in many different tongues. Thus part of the Old Testament is about 3300 years in use, and part of the New, almost 1800.

The *first* English Translation of the said Scriptures, of which we have any account, was made in the year of Christ, 706, by Adhelm, the first Bishop of Sherborne. The English language, however, being then merely in infancy, this Translation is rather *Saxon*;—which is the basis of our tongue.

Alfred the Great, during whose reign some slight progress was made in the formation of the English language, caused a Translation to be undertaken in the year 890; but he died before it was completed. It was, however, disseminated in its incomplete state. Several Translations were soon after presented to the world; and his grandson, King Athelstan, caused one to be made in 930.

Cardinal Hugo, in 1240, formed the first *Concordance* to the Scriptures; divided the Books into *Chapters*, and sub-divided the Chapters into *Sections*, which, before his time, had no existence. The division into *Verses* is a much later invention, and was accomplished by Robert Stephens, in 1551—a few years after the invention of printing.

A Translation of the whole Bible, in the then English, came forth in the year 1290, and was followed 70 years after by one issued by John Trevisa, vicar of Berkley, Cornwall.

But the first translation that can properly be called *English*, was made by John Wickliffe, the herald of the Reformation, in or about the year 1380. The following specimen, taken from the beginning of the Gospel according to Luke, and now numbered verse 5th, will shew the style of the Translation and state of the language:—

“*In the days of Eroude kyng of Judee ther was a prest Zacarye by name: of the sort of Abia, and his wyf was of the daughtris of Aaron: and hir name was Elizabeth.*”

Down till the year 1526, the Scriptures were disseminated only in *Manuscript*; but in this year, during the reign of Henry the VIII. and soon after the invention of printing, the *first printed* English Translation of the New Testament made its appearance. Tyndall, the principal person engaged in the work, was afterwards put to death by order of the king.

Coverdale, who became Bishop of Exeter, was appointed, through the influence of Archbishop Cranmer, to revise Tyndall's translation; and, in 1537, he published by royal order a complete edition of the Old and New Testament:—a copy of which Henry VIII. commanded to be placed in each church for the accommodation of every person who was desirous to read it.—Though Tyndall was put to death by order of the king for publishing the English New Testament, yet Coverdale adhered to his entire translation of the New, and to his translation of some Books of the Old.

The following *specimen* from the Great Bible, sometimes called Cranmer's, sometimes Coverdale's, for there is very little difference in the editions, (but the New Testament is more justly Tyndall's,) will give the reader an opportunity of comparing the language, spelling, and

other matters, with the present Translation. The *verses* had not been introduced at this period; but the passage, as now printed, will be found in Acts, xii. 5, 6 :—

“ And Peter was kepte in preson. But prayer was made without ceasyng of the congregacion unto God for hym. And when Herod wolde have brought hym out unto the people, the same night slept Peter betwene two soundyers bound wt two chaynes, and the keepers before the door kepte the preson.”

Cranmer's edition, from which this quotation is made, was not long published, when Henry VIII. changed his mind, and instead of placing a copy in every Church, had an Act of Parliament passed, declaring that the Scriptures should be read by the higher classes only, and not by the lower sort without the *license* of the King. This was a strange declaration for a Protestant King to enact in 1545, or near this time; but not so strange as for Pope Pius VI. to declare, in 1778, that the Scriptures “are sources to which *all* ought to have *free access*, in order to draw from them, both a sound doctrine and a pure morality.”

In the reign of Mary, the English refugees, who took shelter at Geneva, where the temple of Calvin is become the monument of Servetus, published in their mother tongue, in 1560, a Translation of the Bible. It became the favourite version of the Calvinists, who were the chief translators, but was never received by the Episcopalian Protestants, though Coverdale, a favourite with Henry VIII. and the confidant of Cranmer, was deeply engaged in it. During the succeeding reigns of Elizabeth and James I. formerly James the VI. of Scotland, this Translation went through a number of editions, some of which are of a later date than even the first edition of the present *authorized* Translation. Though King James pronounced the Geneva Translation to be the worst extant, yet his own translators followed it more closely than any other English version.

In 1565 was published a new Translation for the use of the English Established Church. Fifteen persons were appointed for the work, and as eight of these were Bishops, this Translation was distinguished as the Bishops' Bible. It superseded Cranmer's edition of Coverdale's, and was appointed to be read in Churches.

As the Protestants had to fly to Geneva during the

reign of Mary, so the Roman Catholics were obliged to seek refuge in Flanders during the beginning of Elizabeth's sovereignty. Having removed to Rheims, they published, finding they could not keep the English Bible out of the hands of the common people, a Translation of the New Testament in 1582. The Translation of the Old Testament took place at Douay, in 1609. The Old and New, united, are known by the name of the Douay Bible.

These *five principal Translations*, since *Printing* was introduced,—Tyndall's, Coverdale's, the Geneva, the Bishops', and the Roman Catholic,—were all which were published before the reign of James I. who ascended the throne of England in 1603.

On the accession of this Prince to the throne of Great Britain, a new Translation was projected, and published in 1611, which has continued from that period to be the public, authorized version. Presbyterianism was established in Ireland before this year, and an old Translation was used in the pulpit of *Ballycarry*, and in some other early Congregations. The excellencies and faults of James's Translation are numerous; and had he given no *instructions* to the fifty-four persons whom he employed, it is highly probable that liberal Protestants, and learned Protestant Dissenters, would have much less reason for complaint. The progress of learning, the extension of religious liberty, the improvement of the English language, and the discovery of many valuable *manuscripts*, to which James's Translators had no access, make a new Translation comparatively easy, and enable the learned of the present age to give a more correct representation of the ideas and meaning of the Old and New Testament writers.

Wells, Blackwall, Waterland, Pilkington, Purver, Durell, White, Professor of Arabic, Oxford, Kennicott, Green, Bagot, Bishop of Norwich, Professor Symonds, of Cambridge University; Principal Campbell, of Aberdeen College; Bishop Lowth, Bishop Watson, Archbishop Secker, Archbishop Newcome, the learned Gilbert Wakefield, the celebrated and persecuted Wm. Whiston, Dr. Doddridge, John Wesley, Harwood, Macknight, Wynne, Worsley, Blayney, Hopkins, Holden, Hodgson, Geddes, Simpson, Gerrard, Priestley, Kenrick, Belsham, Carpenter, Wellbeloved, and a host of the most eminent

and pious men, have pronounced themselves in favour of a new Translation of the Scriptures.

The Eclectic Review for January 1809, a Calvinistic publication, puts, among many others, the following judicious question: "Were the Hebrew and Greek *languages*, considered as languages, as well understood by the learned in 1607," (the year in which James's Translators had finished their task,) "as they are now in 1809?"

After several observations to prove that they were not, this question is afterwards put—"Were the means and opportunities which King James's Translators actually possessed, employed in the *best and fairest* manner, for the improvement and perfection of their great work?"

No competent judge dares say they were. The fact is, that every little divine, more especially of the orthodox school, is correcting James's Translators, at ordinations and other solemnities; and is frequently guilty of the strange anomaly of praising the authorized translation in the *gross*, as if its authors were infallible, and condemning it in the *retail*, when his own dogmas are in danger.

The following specimens, extracted from the *old Translation* of the Testament, and which will bear the strictest criticism, will give the readers of the *Bible Christian* an opportunity of comparing them with the same verses in the present authorized version. As the *Trinitarians* themselves will scarcely dare, bold as they are in assertion, to charge Tyndall, Coverdale, and Cranmer with *Unitarianism*, the selections demand from them a serious and impartial examination.

JOHN, i. 3.—"All thynges were made by IT, and without IT was made nothyng that was made."

PHILIPP. ii. 9.—"Wherefore God hath exalted him, and given him a name above all names: that IN the name Jesus, shulde every knee bow."

ACTS, vii. 59.—"And they stoned Stephen. CALLING ON, and saying, Lord Jesu receive my spryte."

HEBREWS, i. 8.—"But unto the Sonne he sayd, God thy seate shall be for ever and for ever."

1 JOHN, iii. 16.—"Hereby perceave we love, that he gave his lyfe for us, and therefore ought we also to give our lyves for the brethren."

It is manifest, from the above quotations, that James's Translators have much altered the *Old Translation*; and it must strike the Greek scholar that the *Old Translation* is more faithful to the original than the *New*. In the very verse last quoted they have forced in the phrase *of God*, without authority;—a phrase which introduces an awful meaning. It is true, this phrase is printed, in the generality of the editions of the Testament, in *Italic letters*, thereby warning the reader of its want of authority; but as this printing is a mark of emphasis in other books, it is well known that many people take it in a similar sense in the Bible. It is even upon this and other obscure passages that Calvinists too often build their faith, leaving plain Scripture unnoticed and unknown. And when passages, hard to be understood, will not furnish them with the desired phraseology, which is requisite for the support of their tenets, they will quote from the *contents* placed at the head of chapters, which are no more a part of Scripture than the Athanasian creed, or the Overtures of the General Synod of Ulster.

If prejudice and superstition were to explain Scripture expressions which are hard to be understood, and which men too often wrest to their own confusion, by those which are so plain that he who runs may read, a new Translation would be less necessary; but as the very reverse is often the case, an improved Translation cannot be too soon published.

GAMMA.

A FEW GENERAL REMARKS ON THE 1st VOLUME OF "THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN."

I claim a place in your Publication on the ground of having read through the *entire pages* of "The Orthodox Presbyterian." This voluntary penance was manfully endured, as an expiation for the crime of what is commonly called Orthodoxy, of which I myself was once guilty; but *that* iniquity at least is taken away—that sin is purged. But before I venture to give you my opinion of some parts or portions of the above-named sage and erudite production, I must let you a little into my

own history, as a somewhat necessary preliminary.— Know, then, that I was born and bred a genuine ‘Orthodox Presbyterian.’ My father was a Ruling Elder in a truly Calvinistic congregation; and often did I sit for five hours together, under the unction of the Gospel, from that eminently gifted man of God, the Rev. James Elder, of Finvoy. The Larger and Shorter Catechisms were the very rudiments of my education; and, before I was ten years of age, the contents of the Westminster Confession were as “familiar in my mouth as household words.” My progress through “Boston’s Fourfold State,” “Isaac Ambrose’s First, Middle, and Last Things,” “The Crook in the Lot,” “A Glimpse of Glory,” “A Drop from the Rock,” and many such edifying volumes, was rapid and successful, and I was pronounced the most promising and pious youth in the community. That such qualifications might not be lost to the world, it was determined I should be educated for the Ministry, as there was no doubt I would turn out a polished shaft in the temple, and prove a burning and a shining light, in a dark and backsliding generation.— Well, now, suppose almost all the previous steps gone through—my classical, philosophical, and, I was about to say, my theological studies, ended, and I thus “sailing before the wind” to the goal of all my friends’ hopes, and of my own ambition. In the very flush of my expectations, however, and in the very assurance of my success, the Synodical Overtures of 1828 arrested my progress, and I paused to deliberate. Some misgivings now arose in my mind: the assumption of the self-styled Orthodox—their arrogant dictation to others—their pharisaical pride—their spiritual pretensions—their disposition to “lord it over God’s heritage”—became more and more developed, and I stood amazed at my own thoughtlessness in not having sooner questioned the correctness of their creed—the *christianity* of their conduct. In fact, I had hitherto travelled on in the beaten path of my fathers, without presuming to think; my early prejudices were almost insurmountable; and I regarded with pity, or detestation, the person whose opinions, on what I conceived to be the fundamental articles of religion, were different from my own. The heart-probing Committee next sprang into existence, and fairly astounded me: and I was forced on the enquiry,

how far they had a *right* to examine, and how far I was qualified to answer satisfactorily for *them*, and to *myself*. My intentions respecting the Ministry were in the meantime suspended, and remain so ; and I sat down with the Bible before me, to study *its* system of Divinity, as something that really might be useful to a Preacher of the Gospel—not that it is *absolutely* necessary in these days of the outpourings of the spirit, for creeds, confessions, committees, and overtures amply supply its place. But I had some qualms of conscience on the subject, and resolved to appease them. I therefore read with diligence, and, I trust, with humility and candour ; I think, also, with profit, and, I am sure, with conviction—full, satisfactory, and unwavering. I learned to look on religion as something designed to promote human happiness, and therefore adapted to the state and condition of man, as a reasonable being, endowed with an immortal soul. I was led to contemplate the God and Father of the universe with a mind unobscured and unclouded by the mystic gloom of Calvinism, and free from the heart-withering feelings which that horrid system is naturally calculated to inspire. In short, I have given up Orthodoxy, and am become a “ Bible Christian.”

But lest I should be charged with renouncing the principles imbibed in childhood, and derived from “ the wisdom of our ancestors,” too rashly, I became a subscriber, in due time, to the “ Orthodox Presbyterian”—that repertorium of evangelical truth, biblical literature, and classical elegance. Well, Sir, never was the fable of the mountain bringing forth the mouse more happily illustrated, than in, and by that sapient production. Its announcement was hailed as an omen fatal to the Unitarian cause ; it was to strike at the very root and foundation of all new-light heresies ; Arianism would fall to rise no more ; and the doctrine—the all-important doctrine of the Trinity, would be established for ever. Under its auspices a new heaven and a new earth would appear ; the children of Calvin would increase and multiply, and replenish the world ; all old things would become new ; and, with a power and authority superior even to that of St. Patrick, would it sweep away all noxious things from the ecclesiastical portion of this happy land. The Prospectus appeared—empty, drawl-

ing, and drivelling; then the leading article in the first Number—full of gross misrepresentations, delusive promises, and inconsistent declarations. In process of time we are favoured with a series of lucubrations on the Deity of Christ, containing, as the author very facetiously remarks, some *overwhelming* arguments on this important subject; but which were scattered before the breath of “The Bible Christian” like the down of the thistle before the wind of the mountain. In these matters, however, there was nothing to satisfy the yearnings of the genuine sons of Orthodoxy; nothing about the TRINITY—that all-absorbing doctrine—that infallible TEST of spiritual life—that touchstone of truth—that talisman by which profligacy is transmuted into virtue, and corruption into purity: there was nothing of this, and murmurs and discontent began to spread among the ranks of the faithful. Something must be done; and accordingly something was attempted—an “Illustration of Scripture difficulties;” and, for this purpose, a passage in I. Cor. chap. xv. commencing at the 24th verse, was selected. The passage is important, but the learned *illustrator* endeavoured to render it apparently more so, and thereby to enhance his own *illustrative* powers, by announcing it as being “supposed by some the very strong hold of Arianism.” This I deny: but no matter—let it pass. To attack this strong hold, then—to blow up this fortress of the enemy of souls, due and solemn preparation was made, and war was proclaimed in May-street Church, with an appropriate flourish of

“Guns, drums, trumpets, blunderbuss, and thunder.”

To drop metaphor—the article appeared, and it was to be the *first* of a *Series*,—my conscience!! a *series* of *such illustrations!!!* Well, well,

Cedite Graii & Romani Scriptores,—
which, being interpreted, runneth thus:—

“Ye Unitarian authors, great and small,
This *illustrating* writer beats you all.”

Unfortunately for the public, “The Bible Christian” chose to take the author short by the nose, even when he was puffing and panting after his extraordinary exertion; his career was interrupted; Scripture difficulties were given up, as being difficult indeed; he walked off the ground; and, as an *illustrator*, we beheld him no more.

But, Sir, I perceive I am trespassing on your patience, and on your Paper. I say, then, seriously, that the "Orthodox Presbyterian" has come infinitely short of the expectations excited. That it has given no satisfaction whatever, on the points at issue betwixt it and its opponents, and on which its principal conductors were the active instruments of dividing the Synod of Ulster, and of bringing disgrace on the Presbyterian name; that its reasonings on such subjects have been puerile, and its *illustrations* ridiculous; that it has not dared to defend the creed it professes to believe, but has uniformly shrunk from entering the lists of legitimate controversy with "The Bible Christian;" and that its misstatements, its quibbling, its silliness and shallowness, and its honour and honesty, have been exposed to merited indignation and contempt, by "Erasmus," "V. D. M." "A Remonstrant," "Beta," "Delta," and others, without even an attempt to reply. It affects, indeed, to maintain a dignified silence: that is good, but it won't do long. Some of its champions are well known to be fond of displaying their oratorical talents; and it is beginning to be whispered, that they have nothing to say, otherwise they would not be silent. Let them look to it; the public cannot always be gulled by declamation without argument, and assertion without proof. In the words of the "Orthodox Presbyterian," "In this country there seems to be, at the present time, a mighty contest between light and darkness, truth and error, Christ and Belial;" and farther, "Great is the truth, and it will prevail."

J. H. W.

ON THE DELUSIVE HOPES HELD OUT TO DYING CRIMINALS.

To the Editor of the Bible Christian.

SIR,—I am afraid that it cannot be denied, that it is a very general, nay, almost a uniform practice with those who call themselves Orthodox, to encourage the most atrocious criminals to work themselves up into what they call a converted state, and express a dying conviction that the blood of Christ has cleansed them from all

their sins, and that they can now demand admission into the regions of glory.

This is an age in which very persevering attempts are made to circulate blasphemy; and the venders of blasphemous publications are most industrious—unwearied—not to be deterred by punishment—in short, they have as much zeal as any religionists can have. But not all the blasphemy that Carlisle has published is half as blasphemous, or calculated to do half as much injury, as these dying declarations to which I allude.

Most of your readers will recollect accounts of such declarations on the scaffold, after the most atrocious crimes, which proved an inveterate wickedness of soul, and a hardened villany of character. Among the tracts called religious, that are now so diligently published and circulated, is an account of conversations held by Ministers of the Gospel, in Edinburgh, with three young men, that were convicted of an atrocious riot in that city some time ago. These conversations had so effectually wrought upon the minds of these young men, that, on coming out to the scaffold, the attending Minister makes this observation on their appearance:—"I shall never, (says he) forget their appearance when they came out of this apartment. Their countenances beamed with a hope full of immortality. They looked as if they would have said, 'We are now ready to depart—we have thrown ourselves into the arms of Divine mercy—we believe that God has accepted of us. The Almighty Jesus is our Saviour. We have no fear of death, whom Christ has conquered. We are going to his presence, to dwell for ever with the Lord. Our joy is unspeakable, and full of glory.' One of them said, 'I am quite comfortable and happy. *Surely the Lord is with us. I feel that the Holy Ghost is in my heart.*' "

If you were to put a value upon the degrees of guilt, you might perhaps say that this was certainly not so aggravated as some others; but what deserves your serious attention is, that difference in guilt is of no moment whatever. They are taught that the blood of Christ is sufficient to cleanse from any sin however great. An infinite accumulation of guilt is as easily washed away as the slightest stain—because the atonement is infinite. It has already been sufficient for the sins of the Orthodox from the beginning of the world, and will continue so till the world shall be no more.

Is not this enough to cause pain to any well-disposed mind? It is, indeed, fearful to look at all the consequences that may follow from the exhibition of such scenes upon the scaffold.

We might have some consolation if these dying declarations produced an effect on their accomplices who were perhaps witnesses to their execution—though even so, this deluding of the mind of one, at that awful period, in the hope of making an impression upon others is unjustifiable. But I have never heard of such an effect being produced, nor will it ever, except in some very rare and peculiar case. But one effect *will* follow. Every culprit left for execution, will (if he feel alarmed at the approach of death,) soon experience the new birth in his heart, and become a child of God, an heir of glory.

Take another view of this matter. Among the abuses of Popery—the absolving power that was claimed by the Holy See, was not the least important. Indeed, it was so very captivating—so very desirable a power to have, that the Established Church of England would not part with it: but have still an office, in their book of Common Prayer, for the absolution of the sick: in which the priest uses these absolving words—“Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his *Church* to absolve all sinners, who truly repent and believe in him—of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences, and, *by the authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.—Amen.*”

This is an assumption of very high powers and privileges, for which there is not the slightest warrant in the Holy Scriptures. It is making every clergyman in the Church, a vicegerent of Him who declares, Vengeance is mine: and has, with the greatest reason, given high offence to dissenters, and to many of the most pious and learned of their own communion. It is one of those numerous relics of Popery retained in the Church of England, which have given occasion to some to express a hope, whether ironically or not I cannot tell, that the Church of England and Church of Rome may one day be again united, without either of them departing very far from their present standards.

Now this usurped and most dangerous power has always given very high and very just offence to every

rational dissenter : and must, I think, be very offensive to every pious reader of the Bible who thinks upon the subject. But where is the difference between this practice and that which I have just been reprobating ? Surely the Religionists of the present day, when they encourage culprits to come to the gallows and express their assurance of forgiveness and of everlasting happiness, in such a confident tone, are, in point of fact, assuming a power of absolution.

I ask then, on what grounds can any man or any body of men arrogate the prerogative of the Most High, and pretend to determine that a few, and, in the worst cases, a *very* few hours of nervous agitation, of distracting fears, that would make a man willing to catch at any straw to save him, and, during which, he is continually pressed with a particular view of a disputed question in Theology, will be sufficient to wipe off the atrocities of a wicked life ? It makes one tremble to think of the subject. No doubt, every possible method, consistent with truth, should be used to make such men feel sorry for their transgressions ; to induce them to occupy their remaining moments in acquiring as deep a sense of religion as can be done in the time : but there is no intensity of devotion that can be imagined, which can be pronounced by any human being to be satisfactory to the Searcher of Hearts ; and, therefore, it is most dangerous to allow any individual to determine so positively on his own state, without any possible way of knowing how long this impression of Religion would last, if the fear of death were to be removed : or of distinguishing between the effects of apprehension and the results of conviction.

Let us now consider the validity of the great argument which is used to produce this impression on the minds of these wicked people. It consists in the application of such expressions as “ Christ died for the ungodly—the just for the unjust—the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin,” and any others of similar import to the particular case. And the sinner either makes the transition himself, or it is made for him ; and he says : If Christ died for the ungodly, there is no one more ungodly than I ; therefore, if I can become a true believer in the Lord I am safe ; for the greatness of my sin will not stand in my way, because the blood of an

infinite Being is sufficient to cleanse from any sin, however great. This, or some such train of argument, can be evidently traced in some of those accounts to which I have alluded. It seems, indeed, extraordinary, that any intelligent reader of the New Testament can be led away by such reasoning. The fallacy is very evident: it consists in applying to persons born in a Christian land, brought up in a belief of the doctrines of Christianity; acquainted, or in full possession of the means of becoming acquainted, with its precepts, its hopes, its fears, its promises, its threats, with all in it that can terrify man from sin, or entice him to virtue; and who has testified, by abandoned profligacy and voluntary incorrigible indulgence in every vicious propensity, an utter hardness of heart, and disregard to the mercies of God: it is, I say, applying to him an assertion that was made to those under very different circumstances—a promise that was given to those who were grown up men when Christ first appeared; or, what comes to the same thing, when they had first the opportunity of hearing him; persons who had never known what the truth was—who had been reared in a reliance upon the efficacy of the Jewish ceremonies, which were so many as completely to prevent any rational consideration from having access to the mind; or who had been nurtured in a heathen country, where nothing but what was abominable would meet their eyes or salute their ears. To such, the message of glad tidings in the first instance came: to such, the Holy Son of God, with unspeakable benignity, made the offer of immediate pardon for all the errors, vices, and enormities of their past lives, if they were willing, for the future, to abandon their sinful course, become his disciples, and learn of him how they were to live hereafter, so as to be well pleasing in the sight of God. This is perfectly consonant to right reason. There is nothing here incompatible with the most enlarged and correct view that can be taken of the Divine nature and government, or of the unspeakably gracious character of the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.

This same power of free and immediate pardon upon sincere repentance, Christ allowed his apostles to exercise in his name; engaging that whatever remission of sins they would grant in his name would be confirmed

by him. That whatever sins they should remit, should be remitted; and whatever they retained should be retained. But I have yet to learn the part of Scripture where the absolving power, so confidently claimed by the Church of Rome and the Church of England, is countenanced in Scripture. Perhaps St. Peter could give a power that he did not claim for himself: but we know from his advice to Simon, that he did not feel himself authorized to judge of the repentance that would secure a pardon for a wilful offence committed by a Christian. Simon is admitted to have been a true christian: he had received the gifts of the Holy Spirit: and yet all the encouragement that Peter gave him was to repent and pray to God, if, *perhaps*, the thought of his heart should be forgiven him. It yet remains to be shown, how these Orthodox Ministers of the Gospel acquired a power that Peter had not: how they are authorized to remit, with the utmost plenitude of authority, the most atrocious villanies that can be almost conceived; and Peter, for the offence of wanting to purchase the privilege of granting the gifts of the Holy Spirit, declined assuring him that his penitence was sufficient to atone for his offence of thinking that the gift of God could be purchased with money: but merely recommended sincere repentance and humble prayer to the great God of all. It would be wise in those who take upon themselves the responsibility of thus quieting the perturbed conscience, to bear in mind, that St. Matthew informs us that there are sins that cannot be forgiven either in this world or the next. Either he or they must be in error: for there does not seem to be one in the catalogue of actual or imaginable offences, that they will not wash as white as snow, to any that they can find as fanatical as themselves.

But I presume that I have dwelt sufficiently long upon this point, much longer, indeed, than is pleasant; for, though this error is one of great importance, yet there is a feeling arising from the contemplation of a wretched being, who goes to meet his end under the delusion that he is safe for ever in the enjoyment of heavenly bliss, and awakes to find that he is shut out from happiness, and reserved for a justly merited punishment, that cannot but give pain to every one who thinks seriously upon the matter.

LETTER,

To a Gentleman holding reputed Orthodox opinions, which was written by a Lady in Dublin, about December, 1816.

We know that the amiable author of this letter has unwillingly consented to give it to the public, and we feel highly honoured, that, having conquered her scruples, she has chosen the pages of "The Bible Christian" for the communication. The arguments and charity, so happily blended in it, cannot fail to gratify and improve our readers; and they give evidence of the soundness of the head and the purity of the heart that advanced them. It would gladden our spirits to witness the same *mildness and firmness* diffused throughout society; and we do hope, that the sentiments expressed may moderate the fanaticism of some of our more Orthodox ladies. We shall feel grateful if our fair and highly esteemed correspondent will favour us occasionally with an article. EDITORS.

The writer of the following letter is a female. It was written some years ago, in reply to a very uncharitable and unchristian attack made upon her, by a gentleman, on account of her religious opinions. Her first impulse, on receiving his bigotted effusion, was to take no notice of it; but, upon consideration, she thought she had an immortal soul, and, of course, had as much at stake as the most leading member of the Synod of Ulster; that she was called upon to give an answer for the hope that is in her. She was then residing in Dublin, and was a member of the Congregation of Strand-Street; but it was not there she first learned her creed; it was from the BIBLE she was instructed. She was led to the study of the Scriptures in very early youth, in the house of a truly Christian Minister of the Synod of Ulster—at a time when genuine Christian Ministers were numerous in that Reverend Body; and she arrived at the age of womanhood before she had ever heard of the Calvinistic opinion being set forth with so much zeal as at the present day—that the Everlasting Father was on earth in the human form, and that he died, (the self-existent Almighty God died!!!) an ignominious death upon the Cross, to reconcile the creatures to him that he himself had made. No language has power to express the horror she felt upon hearing this revolting doctrine—she thought then, as she thinks now, that it was nothing short of absolute blasphemy.

It will be seen by the date of the letter, that it is many years since it was written. The writer has been frequently requested to publish it, and she now gives her consent upon the urgent entreaty of some friends, who are not in the habit of asking what should be refused. She will probably be accused of vanity and presumption in suffering it to be made public; but if those who so accuse her, could know the reluctance with which she has given her consent, she would stand acquitted even in their mind. In giving her permission for the printing of it, she throws herself upon the candour of the readers of "The Bible Christian."

LETTER.

DEAR SIR—I have been so occupied in mind and body, administering to what you would call the pomps and vanities of this world, since I received your letter, that I have not had leisure to acknowledge the receipt of it until now. I am willing to suppose (in Christian charity) that you mean it well; and I should be sorry to suspect that it was only the vanity of *self-opinion* that induced you to take up so much of your time, and spend so much apparent zeal, to so little purpose. My religious opinions have not been lightly taken up; they were built upon conviction, on my best judgment diligently exercised on the word of *God*, according to the command of Him who requires us to search the Scriptures—to judge for ourselves what is right—to prove all things, and to hold fast that which is good."

As truth, and not opinion, is my aim, I am not likely to change my sentiments until I am convinced I am wrong; and, as I take *the Word of God as my only guide*, I am not afraid of falling into error. You have taken upon you to pronounce a heavy condemnation on me, and all who attend the place of worship I frequent. The Pharisees of old pronounced judgment against all who renounced their traditions and followed the blessed Jesus, who was guiding them to the true religion.

You say, I deny Christ; and, in order to be consistent, I must also deny his word, and that I have rejected him as much as the Jews. Unhappy man! I pity your ignorance and blind prejudice, which can lead you to cast such reflections upon your fellow Christians. No, Sir, your charges are false; I repel them as base aspersions. I openly and secretly profess Christ as my

Saviour and Redeemer: I take his Holy Gospel as the rule of my conduct through life. Though I am not so uncharitable as to deny the name and hopes of Christians, to all those who differ from me in opinion, yet I do not think it presumption in me to assert, that I, and my fellow-worshippers, are more truly the followers of Christ than you, or any who maintain the unscriptural doctrines by which the purity of his Gospel has been corrupted. We labour to restore our blessed religion to its original truth and simplicity, as it was taught by our Divine Master. We take his word *alone* as our guide, and we carefully avoid to "teach for doctrines the commandments of men. I believe, firmly believe, in the divine mission of Jesus; believe he was the beloved *Son of God*, on whom the Spirit of *God* was poured "without measure." But I cannot believe he was the Supreme God himself: if I did, I must shut my eyes against reason and revelation. I could bring forth the whole tenor of Scripture, both the Old and the New, to prove my opinions, and a much greater number of texts than you could; and I should have one advantage over you, that my proofs are *direct*, and as *plain* as language can make them; and yours will be found forced, and to bear several interpretations.

The supreme GOD, in whom I believe, is unchangeably possessed of all his attributes; but Jesus declares that there are attributes to which he has no claim—for instance, when the mother of Zebedee's children asked him to allow one of her sons to sit upon his right hand, and the other upon his left hand, in his kingdom, his answer was: "You know not what you ask: it is *not mine* to give." You will say, no doubt, that he gave this answer when he was in the flesh, which is the subterfuge always resorted to, when no other reason can be given. But I would ask,—if he was *God*, did he not know that he would have this power when he *was* in his kingdom? but, on the contrary, he declares that he is not all-powerful. In another passage he tells his disciples, "of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in Heaven, *neither the Son, but the Father.*" Thus he declares that he is not *omniscient*. In another place he asks, "Why callest thou me good; there is none good but one, that is *God.*" Thus

he makes *a clear distinction* between the Almighty and himself, in the very attributes in which he most resembles his heavenly Father. In another place he declares, that "my Father is greater than I." To all this you would give the answer already quoted, that he was in the flesh, and which I think is an insult to the candour and simplicity of the Redeemer's character:—it represents him as a double-dealer; sometimes speaking in *one* character, and sometimes in *another*, and not intelligible in *either*: it is more injurious to his Gospel than the enmity of the Jews, or the persecutions of the Heathens. But to take this subterfuge from you, I shall give one other passage from Scripture, which, to me, is conclusive, if there was not another: it is in John's account of the resurrection of Christ, when he says to Mary Magdalene, who first saw him, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father and your Father, to my God, and your God. You will not surely say, that he was then in the flesh, as you call it; he had been dead, and was risen again; he had shaken off his mortality, yet he says, "he ascends to his God." Does not Christ himself emphatically command his disciples to make *God* the supreme object of religious homage?—"In that day, (that is, after his ascension,) ye shall ask me nothing; but whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." To whom, I would ask, did our Saviour pray during his stay upon earth? was it to himself? You lay great stress upon that expression, "I and my Father are one." I am surprized that a person with his Bible in his hand, and who seems to have read it with interest, could display such ignorance of our Saviour's meaning, and which he explains fully in the same Gospel: "I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you:" "I and my Father are one; I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one." If you ever read these passages in the Gospel of John, I am surprized that you could mistake their meaning. To me they appear clear and comprehensive. In this matter, then, there is no alternative left me in the opinion I am to form; whether I am to give up reason and Scripture and follow you, *or* to retain my understanding, and believe the Word of God. I am little acquainted with controversy, and ill qualified to support an argument with any one; but the Scriptures

are open to all, and the faculty of reason was given me by my Creator to form my judgment. There is enough in the Scriptures, *plain* to the *meanest capacity*, to teach us our duty, without perplexing our understanding, or destroying our charity, by attaching our thoughts to *mystery*. For my own part, my creed has been,

“ For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right.”

But I am, indeed, far from saying that my life is in the right. I pray God to keep me from the sin of presumption. I know that my utmost efforts must fall short of what they ought to be, and that, when I have done all I can, I am still an unprofitable servant. I believe there is no sect which professes Christianity, which does not think that Faith is necessary to salvation. But had I faith sufficient to remove mountains, and were I capable of giving a blind assent to absurdities, inconsistent with scripture and reason, I must consider such Faith as destructive to my spiritual good, and likely to bring me to imposture and corruption.

The inutility of good works is a very convenient doctrine to them who are not disposed to perform any. But what sort of a world would this be, (suppose we never looked for another,) if we were not enjoined to good works by religion, and if we had no check but human laws? If good works partake of the *nature of sin*, why are we told to “work out our own salvation?” Do not “the Devils believe and tremble?” What then, I would ask, is to make a difference between us and Devils, *but* good works? and why are we told that the almsdeeds of Cornelius ascended with his prayers, as a memorial before the throne of God? and Cornelius was not a professing Christian.

Sir, you have given me an advice; of course, you cannot take it amiss if I give you one in return. I would, therefore, say, take the beam out of thine own eye, before you attempt to take the mote out of mine.” You think yourself a Christian: “when you think you stand, take heed lest you fall.” How then can you forget the first of Christian virtues,—Charity;—a virtue that the Apostle ranks higher than Faith—yet you so far forget it as to say, “that there is no salvation for me while I continue to hold my present opinions. I am not dismayed, Sir, by such bigotry; the Papists say the

very same of you. All impure and unchristian Churches doom each other; I, and my fellow worshippers, condemn none. In that respect we have the superiority, as well as our zealous endeavour to vindicate the *truth*. I thank God I have a more merciful Judge, and that I am not to be tried by you! The Being who created me will make allowances for the frailty of my nature; and, if he sees that I endeavour to resist temptation to sin, and that, with all my strength and soul, I study to adorn the doctrine of my Saviour by righteousness, integrity, and charity to my fellow creatures, I feel not the least doubt but he will, through the intercession of my Redeemer, Jesus Christ, receive me in mercy. I now close this correspondence, Sir, praying to God to remove your sinful bigotry; instruct your ignorance; and enlighten your mind with the beams of His Heavenly truth! I am, &c.

*Extracts from the Discourses of Robert Robinson,
Baptist Minister of Cambridge.*

“ Let us take care not to forestall the inspired writers, by seizing their general notion of the death of Christ, and supposing several absurd things about it which they never thought of. It would be easy, at this rate, to make a monstrous error of a Scripture truth; as, for example, were we to suppose that God was out of temper with mankind, and that Jesus Christ brought him to good humour, by offering to shed his blood; or, that God was a cruel being, who delighted in human blood; or, that Jesus Christ died to save his disciples the trouble of being holy. Such notions some unthinking people have entertained, perhaps from their own negligence, and, perhaps, too, from the wild way in which some rash teachers, more zealous than wise, have treated of this awful subject—a subject which demands, both in speakers and hearers, the utmost cautious gravity and seriousness. Were I to give you one general rule for expounding subjects of pure revelation, I would say, Explain the doctrine by itself; the principle by the practice, the practice by the principle; the cause by its effects, the effects by their cause: and never expound

an article of pure revelation by your own temper, good or bad. A very good-tempered man is very apt to think God must be like him, and therefore must forgive offences without requiring any sacrifice to the honour of his justice. An ill-tempered man is apt to think Jesus Christ suffered in consequence of a barbarousness in God, something like what he feels when his temper is roused and savage. Let us be sober, my brethren : let us not expound the wisdom of God by our own folly, and say, I would have done so and so, and therefore God should have done so and so ; and if he hath not done so, then I doubt whether he hath done right."

"The perfection, which we ascribe to Jesus Christ, is not like that which is attributed to men or angels ; but is to be understood both absolutely and relatively. I will explain myself. Jesus was absolutely perfect and complete in all the senses of his body and faculties of his mind, so that, without any relation to us, he would have been the most complete person in the universe ; this I call absolute perfection. This perfect person, by undertaking a public trust, and by executing the office of a Mediator between God and man, became related to mankind, and to all the events that happen in this world ; and by relative perfection, I mean all the powers, privileges, and qualities necessary to the regulation of all affairs in discharge of the high trust committed to him by the Father. *What think ye of Christ ? Is any other person possessed of such a perfect spirit of wisdom and understanding, such a spirit of counsel and might, such a spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord ? Can any compare with him for judging with righteousness, arguing with equity, and slaying the wicked with the breath of his lips ? Whose son is he that tames the temper of wolves, lions, and leopards, so that lambs and kids may lie down with them, and a little child to lead them ?* These are the perfections of a *branch out of the stem of Jesse*, a son of the decayed family of David, a root out of that *dry ground* Judea.

And now, my brethren, what honour shall be conferred on this Son of David ? God, the just rewarder of merit, hath conferred the highest honours upon him. A long train of prophets came first in the procession of our king and foretold his approach. The ceremonies of the Jewish Religion were drafts and *patterns* of him.

At his coming a new star appeared to the wise men; angels came down to join with shepherds in singing his praise; his mother and his family, and even the hoary Simeon and Anna were inspired to compose hymns in his praise. During his life the whole world felt his presence; winds and waves, the stubborn ass, the wary fish, the diseases and vices of men obeyed his word, and death yielded up his prey. When he quitted the world, an eclipse, an earthquake, and a resurrection of the dead published the news. *Him God raised from the dead and him he shewed openly, having spoiled principalities and powers, and publicly triumphing over them.* Now that he is ascended to heaven, and set down at the right hand of God he receives all possible honour, and will come again to raise the dead, to judge the world in the glory of his Father and of his holy angels. *What think ye of Christ?* Doth he not deserve all these honours—was ever power more nobly employed than in raising him to all this dignity,—a dignity never abused by him, never perverted to an unjust or an unkind purpose, but always employed for the benefit of the wretched! *What think ye of Christ?* Do you consent to his ascending his throne and being *being crowned with glory and honour*? The day is fixed for his coronation, and then *on his head will be many crowns.* Even the most glorious creatures, who have deserved best of their fellow creatures, will *cast their crown before his throne, saying, thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour!*—page, 101.

TO THE READERS OF THE "BIBLE CHRISTIAN,"
ON THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR.

FRIENDS AND FELLOW CHRISTIANS,

The conductors of this little Publication have brought it down to the close of the year, and they hope not without some profit and pleasure to those who have read it with attention. The "BIBLE CHRISTIAN" may not have accomplished all that was proposed, or intended at its commencement; but it has uniformly kept in view the great leading principles it undertook to advocate, viz.: the privilege of free enquiry, the right of private judgment, and the Bible—the Bible, as the *only infallible* rule of faith and practice. Some of the most important doctrines now at issue betwixt the parties in the Presbyterian Church, have been considered and discussed in its pages—with what success, the public must judge—but it is hoped that they have been treated with candour, liberality, and general good temper. It has attempted to clear away from Christianity those **blots** and pollutions, by which its loveliness is obscured, and its original beauty defaced; and to follow up what appears to have been the design of its blessed founder, directing its appeals to the *understandings* as well as to the *hearts* of believers. It has endeavoured to convince its readers that the God of their worship is not a God of vengeance—a gloomy and vindictive tyrant—a capricious and unrelenting governor—issuing mandates which his subjects cannot obey—enjoining duties which he well knows they cannot perform—fixing their eternal destiny by an absolute decree, and then mocking their weakness and sporting with their infirmities, by proclaiming rewards and punishments. It does not presume to say, that it comes to the "aid of the Lord against the mighty;" but it does say, that it has raised, and will raise, its voice to "vindicate the ways of God to man," and to discourage and suppress, so far as it has the power, every doctrine, and every representation, that would tend to tarnish his glory, or stain his perfections. It has humbly attempted to defend him from the awful inconsistency of inflicting everlasting misery on millions for the guilt of one, and of imputing crime where it is physically and morally impossible it could,

or can be committed; and it has also unequivocally entered its protest against that doctrine, which teaches, that the "High and the Lofty one, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity," and whose tender mercies are over all his works, could be so flagrantly unjust, as to inflict eternal punishment for an act which he had *absolutely decreed* should take place, and which, of course, it was *impossible* for the unhappy victim to *avoid*. In short, it has endeavoured to represent the Most High as an object every way worthy of the reverence, praise, and gratitude of his rational creatures; and religion, as something becoming *him* to offer and them to receive—something designed and calculated to enlighten the mind, to cultivate the thoughts, to expand the faculties, to purify the heart, and to render us "holy, even as he who called us is holy." To promote this purpose, it has uniformly held up Jesus Christ as the "author and finisher of our faith"—the way, the truth, and the life—our instructor—our example and guide, and the "mediator betwixt God and men"—thus affording encouragement to every sincere Christian, to use all diligence to make his calling and election sure; and "not to be weary in well-doing, as in due time he shall reap, if he faint not." The conductors of the "BIBLE CHRISTIAN" acknowledge, with pride and pleasure, the support and encouragement they have received from their numerous and highly respectable correspondents, and the truly flattering reception their Publication has met with, from its commencement down to the present day. In every quarter of our native land it is read; many communications, approving of the design and execution, have been received; and the conductors look forward with every hope of continued success. They need not remind its readers that the number of pages amounts to 150 *above what* was at first proposed; they feel much pleasure in the circumstance, and they trust that in this, as in every other department of the Publication, they will continue to give satisfaction, and to secure the patronage of a discerning public. They know the multitudes arrayed against them—their name is Legion; their activity, perseverance, and resources: but cased in the panoply of truth, and strong in the purity and importance of their cause, they "fear no evil;" not only, therefore, shall they go on as they have begun, but, by the bless-

ing of God, they are determined to proceed with increased and increasing vigour and diligence. Their first year's publication has been, as it were, but an experiment. They were convinced, indeed, that there were many liberal minded and rational christians in the community—many who read the Sacred Volume, and thought and judged for themselves—many also—multitudes, who merely wanted to be set a *thinking*—to be roused from the stupor of insensibility—to be freed from the trammels which education, prejudice, and example had twined about them; and that when such were once awakened to reflection, they would fling the fetters from them, and burst the yoke asunder, which held them in bondage. The experiment has succeeded beyond expectation; and the “Bible Christian,” aided by the circumstances of the times, has been a means, under Providence, of confirming the doubtful, encouraging the timid, and of adding strength to the strong. Its conductors fearlessly promise that it shall not relax its exertions—they request that their labours hitherto may be considered as merely introductory to something more interesting and important; and would most respectfully and seriously call on every lover of truth—on every friend of pure and genuine Christianity—on every person zealous to promote the glory of God and the happiness of man, to assist in plucking the mask from hypocrisy and the sting from fanaticism, and to earnestly contend for “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” The banner of religious freedom is now fairly unfurled, and the “breaking of every yoke” which superstition and bigotry and priestcraft have imposed is proclaimed. Let us rally round the sacred standard—let us bear it up high, with firm and untrembling hands—let it wave widely and brightly over the green fields of Erin, until its population learn to enjoy, and determine to “stand fast in that liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free.”

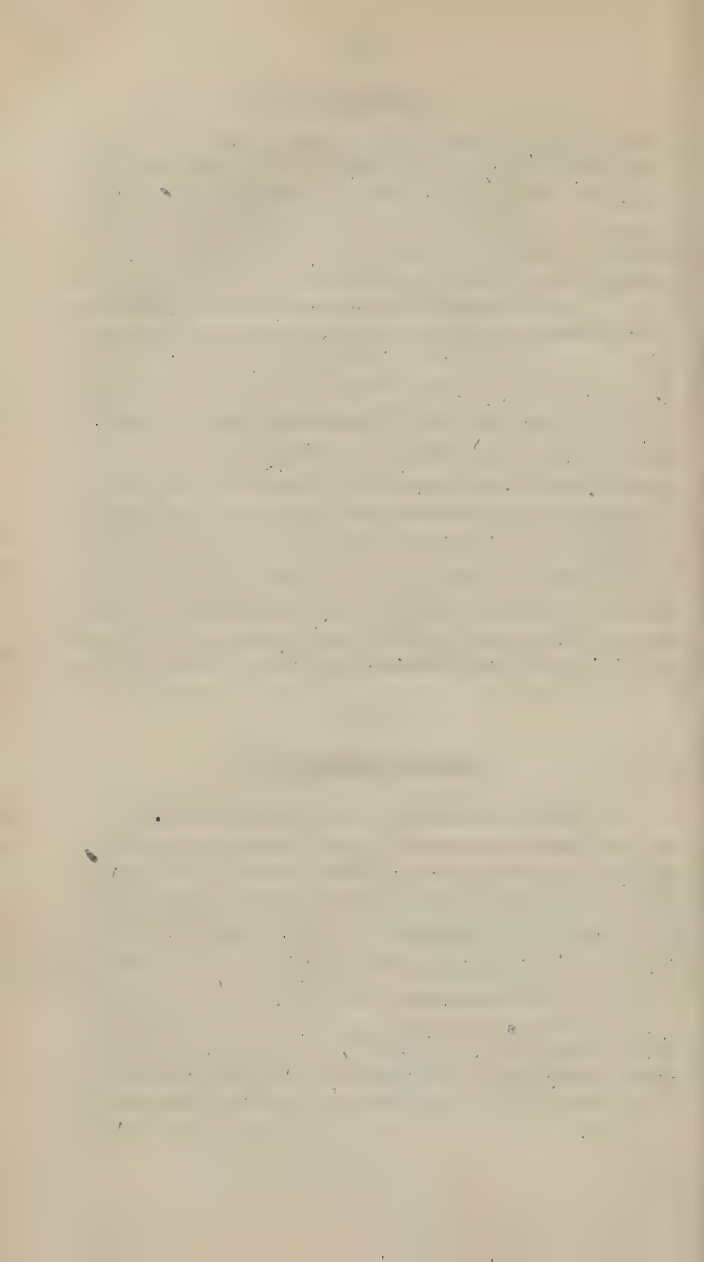
The conductors of this humble Periodical cannot take leave of their readers at this time, without reminding them how swiftly the days and years of their existence glide away, and how fleeting and transitory is the life of man; and yet short as is his pilgrimage on earth, it is frequently chequered by many vicissitudes, and joy and sorrow are often plentifully mingled in the cup

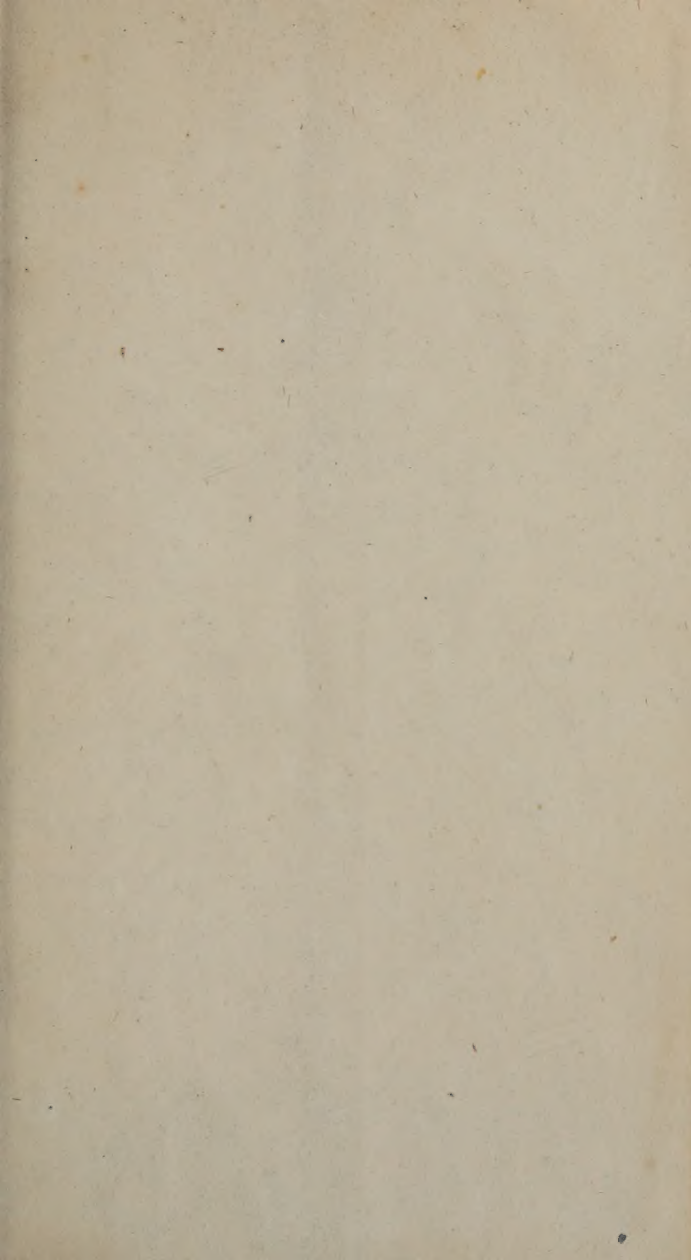
which is given him to drink. In looking back on the events of the past year, many amongst us have to lament the loss of something dear to our affections—some object or objects interwoven with our happiness, but of which, by the natural course of time, or by some unexpected occurrence, we are now bereaved. The parents we revered and loved—the “friend that sticketh closer than a brother,”—the chosen partner of life, with whom we took sweet counsel, and walked together to the house of God—the children of our hopes and affections—from some of these we have been separated by the nature of our situations—by the variety of our pursuits—by their, or our own folly, or by the all destroying hand of death; and a wound may have thereby been left in the heart, which no earthly consideration can heal: or we may have fallen on evil days, and our most ardent expectations may have been disappointed, and our most glowing visions of happiness may have vanished forever. Some such bitter recollections as these recur with almost every revolving year, and powerfully admonish us not to make this world our resting place, nor to set up our tabernacles here, but to seek for an “inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, eternal in the heavens.” But the portion of man is not altogether one of unalleviated misery; and every one of us, on mature reflection, will find much occasion to bless and magnify Jehovah’s name, for mercies temporal and spiritual—for the means of grace and the prospects of glory: and for many a good and perfect gift which has been overlooked or forgotten; and we have all great cause, with grateful hearts, to “rejoice in the Lord, and to joy in the God of our salvation.” But in looking back on the past year, perhaps we could not be more profitably employed, than in considering how it has been spent—and oh! how many sources of regret will we discover in this review—time mispent—opportunities neglected—talents prostituted—sins committed. “Father of peace, and God of love,” enter not into judgment with us, but forgive our transgressions, and “in what we have done amiss may we do so no more.”

In the year on which we have just entered, we may expect similar changes—similar causes of joy and sorrow—of contrition and thanksgiving. In its course, the arm that is this day powerful and strong, shall be

nerveless and withered—fled the roses that now bloom on the cheek of beauty—dim the eye that sparkled with sensibility—silent the tongue of eloquence—and cold the heart that virtue warms, and closed the hand in dust, now “open as day to melting charity.” But in its course, also, temptations and trials will, without doubt, assail us ; and it is to be feared, will sometimes prove too powerful for us. Let us, therefore, be on our guard. Let us “put on the whole armour of God ; quit ourselves like men, and be strong ; and let us so number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.”

One word more : the aspect of nature is, every where around us, cold and cheerless, and must bring to our consideration the state of the poor, and destitute, and helpless of our fellow-mortals. While the winds of winter howl round the comfortable and happy homes of the affluent, without disturbing the peace and pleasure of the social circle within, oh ! let the inmates remember that multitudes on every side are sunk, and sinking into the cheerless gloom of poverty—their lowly habitations open to all the “peltings of the pitiless storm ;” their limbs stretched on the cold damp earth, or, at best, on the poor scanty pallet of straw ; their covering, rags—their food, scarce and loathsome ; and disease of body, and agony of mind torturing the fleeting moments of their miserable existence. To such let the rich extend their compassion and bounty ; and as God has “crowned the year with goodness,” and bounty to them, and caused their cups to overflow, let them impart a portion to their brethren in need ; so shall their enjoyments be doubly relished—the prayers of the poor that cry shall be addressed to heaven for their happiness, and their last moments shall be soothed by the anticipation of the promise, “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.”







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